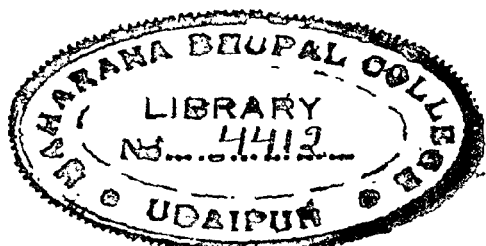


THE QUEEN'S TREASURES
BOOK OF VERSE



FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

Little Gem Poetry Books

Edited by

R. K. & M. L. R. POLKINGHORNE.

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THE QUEEN'S TREASURES BOOK OF VERSE

Edited by

J. COMPTON, M.A.

Director of Education, Ealing



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P R E F A C E

THE purpose of this book is to give you pleasure. You will find here poems of many kinds and in many moods, and ranging in date from the sixteenth century to our own day. I have tried to select from the poems that I like those that I have found to be popular with boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen, and give you as many of them as possible.

I have been disappointed in being unable to include some poems that I wanted you to have. But, after all, an anthology is, at best, an incomplete thing. Its aim is to quicken your delight and interest in poetry so that you will look for more poetry, and the more it stimulates you to pass beyond its limits the greater will be its success. From a vantage-point it gives you a view of a wonderful country. But you must explore for yourself.

An anthology is a personal thing. Every poetry-lover makes his own, even though he does not write it out. There will be a small group of poems that mean a very great deal to him. There will be poets to whom he will be turning constantly. In each of us there is a secret self, and when a

poet has spoken direct to it, his poetry becomes an intimate possession for the rest of our life.

You will build up your own anthology, and it will be different from the anthology of anybody else in the same degree that you are different from anybody else. Meanwhile, I hope you will enjoy the one I have made.

J. C.

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SPRING'S WELCOME

Lyly

WHAT bird so sings, yet so does wail ?
 O, 'tis the ravish'd nightingale.
 Jug, jug, jug, jug, tereu ! she cries,
 And still her woes at midnight rise.
 Brave prick-song ! Who is't now we hear ?
 None but the lark so shrill and clear ;
 Now at heaven's gate she claps her wings,
 The morn not waking till she sings.
 Hark, hark, with what a pretty throat
 Poor robin redbreast tunes his note !
 Hark how the jolly cuckoo sings
Cuckoo ! to welcome the spring !
Cuckoo ! to welcome the spring !

IT WAS A LOVER

Shakespeare

It was a lover and his lass,
 With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
 That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
 In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding ;
 Sweet lovers love the spring.
 This carol they began that hour,
 With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
 How that life was but a flower
 In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding ;
 Sweet lovers love the spring.
 And therefore take the present time,
 With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
 For love is crownèd with the prime
 In the spring-time, the only pretty ring time,
 When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding ;
 Sweet lovers love the spring.

THE NIGHTINGALE

Richard Barnfield

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap, and birds did sing,
Trees did grow, and plants did spring ;
Everything did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty,
That to hear it was great pity :
" Fie, fie, fie," now would she cry ;
" Tereu, tereu ! " by and by ;
That to hear her so complain,
Scarce I could from tears refrain ;
For her griefs, so lively shown,
Made me think upon mine own.
Ah, thought I, thou mourn'st in vain !
None takes pity on thy pain :
Senseless trees they cannot hear thee ;
Ruthless beasts they will not cheer thee ;
King Pandion he is dead ;
All thy friends are lapped in lead ;
All thy fellow birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing.
Even so, poor bird, like thee,
None alive will pity me.
Whilst as fickle Fortune smiled,
Thou and I were both beguiled.
Every one that flatters thee
Is no friend in misery.
Words are easy, like the wind ;
Faithful friends are hard to find :

Every man will be thy friend
 Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend ;
 But if store of crowns be scant,
 No man will supply thy want.
 If that one be prodigal,
 Bountiful they will him call,
 And with such-like flattering,
 " Pity but he were a king."
 But if Fortune once do frown,
 Then farewell his great renown ;
 They that fawned on him before
 Use his company no more.
 He that is thy friend indeed,
 He will help thee in thy need :
 If thou sorrow, he will weep ;
 If thou wake, he cannot sleep ;
 Thus of every grief in heart
 He with thee doth bear a part.
 These are certain signs to know
 Faithful friend from flattering foe.

I STOOD TIPTOE

Keats

I stood tiptoe upon a little hill,
 The air was cooling, and so very still,
 That the sweet buds, which with a modest pride
 Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
 Their scanty-leaved and finely-tapering stems,
 Had not yet lost their starry diadems
 Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.
 The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn,
 And fresh from the clear brook ; sweetly they slept
 On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept
 A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
 Born of the very sigh that silence heaves ;
 For not the faintest motion could be seen
 Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.

EARLY MORN

W. H. Davies

WHEN I did wake this morn from sleep,
It seemed I heard birds in a dream ;
Then I arose to take the air—
The lovely air that made birds scream ;
Just as a green hill launched the ship
Of gold, to take its first clear dip.

And it began its journey then,
As I came forth to take the air ;
The timid Stars had vanished quite,
The Moon was dying with a stare ;
Horses, and line, and sheep were seen,
As still as pictures, in fields green.

It seemed as though I had surprised
And trespassed in a golden world
That should have passed while men still slept !
The joyful birds, the ship of gold,
The horses, line, and sheep did seem
As they would vanish for a dream.

DAYBREAK

Shelley

DAY had awakened all things that be,
The lark, and the thrush, and the swallow free,
And the milkmaid's song, and the mower's scythe
And the matin-bell, and the mountain bee :
Fire-flies were quenched on the dewy corn,
Glow-worms went out, on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim :
The beetle forgot to wind his horn,
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill :
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun,
Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
Fled from the brains which are their prey,
From the lamp's death to the morning ray.

DAWN (from *In Memoriam*)*Tennyson*

TILL now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
 The knolls once more where, couch'd at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field :

And suck'd from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering freshlier overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and swung
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said

"The dawn, the dawn," and died away ;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and death,
 To broaden into boundless day.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

Wordsworth

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

PIPPA'S HOLIDAY (from *Pippa Passes*)*Browning*

DAY!

Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last.
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the
world.

Oh, Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,
A mite of my twelve hours' treasure,
The least of thy gazes or glances,
(Be they grants thou art bound to or gifts above measure)
One of thy choices or one of thy chances,
(Be they tasks God imposed thee or freaks at thy
pleasure)
—My Day, if I squander such labour or leisure,
Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing,
Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and good—
Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming, going,
As if earth turned from work in gamesome mood—
All shall be mine! But thou must treat me not
As prosperous ones are treated, those who live
At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,
In readiness to take what thou wilt give,
And free to let alone what thou refusest;

For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest
 Me, who am only Pippa,—old year's sorrow,
 Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow :
 Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall borrow
 Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's sorrow.

TO MISTRESS MARGARET HUSSEY

Skelton

MERRY Margaret
 As midsummer flower,
 Gentle as falcon
 Or hawk of the tower :
 With solace and gladness,
 Much mirth and no madness,
 All good and no badness ;
 So joyously,
 So maidenly,
 So womanly
 Her demeaning
 In every thing,
 Far, far passing
 That I can indite,
 Or suffice to write
 Of merry Margaret
 As midsummer flower,
 Gentle as falcon
 Or hawk of the tower.

As patient and still
 And as full of good will
 As fair Isaphill,¹
 Coliander,
 Sweet pomander,
 Good Cassander ;²

¹ Isaphill—Hypophylla, a queen of Lorraine

² Cassander—Camomile

Steadfast of thought,
Well made, well wrought,
Far may be sought,
Ere that ye can find
So courteous, so kind,
As merry Margaret,
This midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon
Or hawk of the tower.

O RUDDIER THAN THE CHERRY

Gay

O RUDDIER than the cherry !
O sweeter than the berry !
O nymph more bright
Than moonshine night,
Like kidlings blithe and merry !
Ripe as the melting cluster !
No lily has such lustre ;
Yet hard to tame
As raging flame
And fierce as storms that bluster !

HAVE YOU SEEN BUT A WHITE LILY GROW

Ben Jonson

HAVE you seen but a white lily grow,
Before rude hands have touched it ?
Have you marked but the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it ?
Have you felt the wool o' the beaver ?
Or swan's down ever ?
Or have smelt of the bud o' the brier ?
Or the nard in the fire ?
Or have tasted the bag o' the bee ?
O so white ! O so soft ! O so sweet is she !

ÆGLAMOUR'S LAMENT

Ben Jonson

HERE she was wont to go, and here, and here !
 Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow :
 The world may find the Spring by following her ;
 For other print her airy steps ne'er left :
 Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
 Or shake the downy blow-ball from his stalk ;
 But like the soft west-wind she shot along ;

And where she went, the flowers took thickest root
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

Byron

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;
 And all that's best of dark and bright
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
 Thus mellow'd to that tender light
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
 Had half impair'd the nameless grace
 Which waves in every raven tress,
 Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express
 How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
 But tell of days in goodness spent,
 A mind at peace with all below,
 A heart whose love is innocent !

THERE IS A LADY SWEET AND KIND

Anonymous

THERE is a Lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind ;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gestures, motion, and her smile,
Her wit, her voice, my heart beguile,
Beguile my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is wingèd and doth range,
Her country so my love doth change :
But change the earth, or change the sky,
Yet will I love her till I die.

IN THE HIGHLANDS

Robert Louis Stevenson

IN the highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens
Quiet eyes ;
Where essential silence cheers and blesses,
And for ever in the hill-recesses
Her more lovely music
Broods and dies.

O to mount again where erst I haunted ;
Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,
And the low green meadows
Bright with sward ;
And when even dies, the million-tinted,
And the night has come, and planets glinted,
Lo, the valley hollow
Lamp-bestarred !

O to dream, O to awake and wander
 There, and with delight to take and render,
 Through the trance of silence,
 Quiet breath ;
 Lo ! for there, among the flowers and grasses,
 Only the mightier movement sounds and passes ;
 Only winds and rivers,
 Life and death.

THE PEDLAR'S SONG

Shakespeare

LAWN as white as driven snow,
 Cypress black as ere was crow,
 Cloves as sweet as damask roses,
 Masks for faces, and for noses,
 Bugle-bracelet, necklace amber,
 Perfume for a lady's chamber :
 Golden quoifs and stomachers
 For my lads, to give their dears :
 Pins and peaking-sticks of steel :
 What maids lack from head to heel :
 Come buy of me, come : come buy, come buy,
 Buy, lads, or else your lasses cry : Come buy.

FINE KNACKS FOR LADIES

Anonymous

FINE knacks for ladies ! cheap, choice, brave, and new,
 Good pennyworths—but money cannot move :
 I keep a fair but for the Fair to view—
 A beggar may be liberal of love.
 Though all my wares be trash, the heart is true,
 The heart is true.

Great gifts are guiles and look for gifts again ;
 My trifles come as treasures from my mind :
 It is a precious jewel to be plain ;
 Sometimes in shell the orient'st pearls we find —
 Of others take a sheaf, of me a grain !
 Of me a grain !

BEGGAR'S SONG

Richard Brome

COME ! come away ! the Spring,
 By every bird that can but sing
 Or chirp a note, doth now invite
 Us forth to taste of his delight.
 In field, in grove, on hill, in dale ;
 But above all the nightingale,
 Who in her sweetness strives to outdo
 The loudness of the hoarse cuckoo.

Cuckoo ! cries he ; jug, jug, jug ! sings she :
 From bush to bush, from tree to tree.
 Why in one place then tarry we ?

Come away ! Why do we stay ?
 We have no debt or rent to pay ;
 No bargains or accounts to make ;
 Nor land, nor lease, to let or take.
 Or if we had, should that remove us,
 When all the world's our own before us,
 And where we pass and make resort,
 It is our kingdom and our court.

Cuckoo ! cries he ; jug, jug, jug ! sings she :
 From bush to bush, from tree to tree,
 Why in one place then tarry we ?

INSCRIPTION

(On a Mazer in the British Muscum, 1420)

HOLD your tongue and say the best,
And let your neighbour sit in rest.
Whoso lusteth God to please,
Lets his neighbour sit in ease.

OH, THE SWEET CONTENTMENT *John Chalkhill*

OH, the sweet contentment
The countryman doth find
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
That quiet contemplation
Possesseth all my mind :
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

For courts are full of flattery,
As hath too oft been tried ;
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
The city full of wantonness,
And both are full of pride.
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

But oh, the honest countryman
Speaks truly from his heart,
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
His pride is in his tillage,
His horses and his cart :
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

Our clothing is good sheepskins,
Grey russet for our wives,
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
'Tis warmth and not gay clothing
That doth prolong our lives :
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

The ploughman, though he labour hard,
Yet on his holiday,
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
No emperor so merrily
Does pass his time away :
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

To recompense our tillage
The heavens afford us showers ;
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
And for our sweet refreshments
The earth affords us bowers :
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

The cuckoo and the nightingale
Full merrily do sing,
 High trolollie lollie loe
 High trolollie lie,
And with their pleasant roundelays
Bid welcome to the spring.
 Then care away,
 And wend along with me.

LUCY ASHTON'S SONG

Scott

Look not thou on beauty's charming ;
Sit thou still when kings are arming ;
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens ;
Speak not when the people listens ;
Stop thine ear against the singer ;
From the red gold keep thy finger ;
Vacant heart and hand and eye,
Easy live and quiet die.

JACK AND JOAN

Campion

JACK and Joan, they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still ;
Do their weekdays' work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy day :
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen :
Lash out, at a country feast,
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale ;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy.
All their pleasure is content ;
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows,
And deck her windows with green boughs ;
She can wreaths and tuttyes make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.

Jack knows what brings gain or loss ;
 And his long flail can stoutly toss :
 Makes the hedge which others break ;
 And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
 That study only strange delights ;
 Though you scorn the homespun grey,
 And revel in your rich array :
 Though your tongues dissemble deep,
 And can your heads from danger keep ;
 Yet, for all your pomp and train,
 Securer lives the silly swain.

FOREFATHERS

Edmund Blunden

HERE they went with smock and crook,
 Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade,
 Here they mudded out the brook
 And here their hatchet cleared the glade.
 Harvest-supper woke their wit,
 Huntsman's moon their wooings lit.

From this church they led their brides,
 From this church themselves were led
 Shoulder-high ; on these waysides
 Sat to take their beer and bread.
 Names are gone—what men they were
 These their cottages declare.

Names are vanished, save the few
 In the old brown Bible scrawled ;
 These were men of pith and thew,
 Whom the city never called ;
 Scarce could read or hold a quill,
 Built the barn, the fo mill.

On the green they watched their sons'
 Playing till too dark to see,
 As their fathers watched them once,
 As my father once watched me ;
 While the bat and beetle flew
 On the warm air webbed with dew.

Unrecorded, unrenowned,
 Men from whom my ways begin,
 Here I know you by your ground
 But I know you not within—
 All is mist, and there survives
 Not a moment of their lives.

Like the bee that now is blown
 Honey-heavy on my hand,
 From the toppling tansy-throne
 In the green tempestuous land—
 I'm in clover now, nor know
 Who made honey long ago.

I LEARNT TO LOVE THAT ENGLAND (from
Aurora Leigh) *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

I LEARNT to love that England. Very oft,
 Before the day was born, or otherwise
 Through secret windings of the afternoons,
 I threw my hunters off and plunged myself
 Among the deep hills, as a hunted stag
 Will take the waters, shivering with the fear
 And passion of the course. And when, at last
 Escaped—so many a green slope built on slope
 Betwixt me and the enemy's house behind,

I dared to rest or wander—like a rest
 Made sweeter for the step upon the grass—
 And view the ground's most gentle dimplement,
 (As if God's finger touched but did not press,
 In making England !) such an up and down
 Of verdure,—nothing too much up or down ;
 A ripple of land, such little hills, the sky
 Can stoop to tenderly and the wheatfields climb ;
 Such nooks of valleys, lined with orchises,
 Fed full of noises by invisible streams ;
 And open pastures, where you scarcely tell
 White daisies from white dew,—at intervals
 The mythic oaks and elm-trees standing out,
 Self-poised upon that prodigy of shade—
 I thought my father's land was worthy too
 Of being my Shakespeare's.

WIDDECOMBE FAIR

Anonymous

- " TOM PEARSE, Tom Pearse, lend me your grey mare,"
 All along, down along, out along, lee.
 " For I want for to go to Widdecombe Fair,
 Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
 Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
 Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all."
 Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.
- " And when shall I see again my grey mare ? "
 All along, down along, out along, lee.
 " By Friday soon, or Saturday noon,
 Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
 Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
 Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all."
 Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

Then Friday came and Saturday noon,
All along, down along, out along, lee.
But Tom Pearse's old mare hath not trotted home,
Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

So Tom Pearse he got up to the top o' the hill,
All along, down along, out along, lee.
And he seed his old mare down a-making her will,
Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

So Tom Pearse's old mare her took sick and her died,
All along, down along, out along, lee.
And Tom he sat down on a stone and he cried,
Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

When the wind whistles cold on the moor of a night,
All along, down along, out along, lee.
Tom Pearse's old mare doth appear, gashly white,
Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy,
Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

And all the long night be heard skirling and groans,
All along, down along, out along, lee.
From Tom Pearse's old mare in her rattling bones,

And from Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter
Davy, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

THE HAPPY COUNTRYMAN

Nicholas Breton

Who can live in heart so glad
As the merry country lad ?
Who upon a fair green balk
May at pleasure sit and walk,
And amid the azure skies
See the morning sun arise—
While he hears in every spring
How the birds do chirp and sing :
Or before the hounds in cry
See the hare go stealing by :
Or along the shallow brook,
Angling with a baited hook,
See the fishes leap and play
In a blessed sunny day :
Or to hear the partridge call,
Till she have her covey all :
Or to see the subtle fox,
How the villain plies the box :
After feeding on his prey,
How he closely sneaks away,
Through the hedge and down the furrow
Till he gets into his burrow :
Then the bee to gather honey,
And the little black-haired coney,
On a bank for sunny place,
With her forefeet wash her face :
Are not these, with thousands more
Than the courts of kings do know,
The true pleasing spirit's sights
That may breed true love's delights ?

BRUMANA

James Elroy Flecker

Oh, shall I never, never be home again ?
Meadows of England shining in the rain
Spread wide your daisied lawns : your ramparts green
With briar fortify, with blossom screen
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow
And pure and deep through plains and playlands go,
For me your love and all your kingcups store,
And—dark militia of the southern shore,
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the last lines
Of that long saga which you sang me, pines,
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

O traitor pines, you sang what life has found
The falsest of fair tales.
Earth blew a far-horn prelude all around,
That native music of her forest home ;
While from the sea's blue fields and syren dales
Shadows and light noon-spectres of the foam
Riding the summer gales
On aery viols plucked an idle sound.

Hearing you sing, O trees,
Hearing you murmur, " There are older seas,
That beat on vaster sands,
Where the wise snailfish move their pearly towers
To carven rocks and sculptured promont'ries,"
Hearing you whisper, " Lands
Where blaze the unimaginable flowers."

Beneath me in the valley waves the palm,
Beneath, beyond the valley, breaks the sea ;

Beneath me sleep in mist and light and calm
Cities of Lebanon, dream-shadow-dim,
Where Kings of Tyre and Kings of Tyre did rule
In ancient days in endless dynasty ;
And all around the snowy mountains swim
Like mighty swans afloat in heaven's pool.

But I will walk upon the wooded hill
Where stands a grove, O pines, of sister pines,
And when the downy twilight droops her wing
And no sea glimmers and no mountain shines,
My heart shall listen still.
For pines are gossip pines the wide world through
And full of runic tales to sigh or sing.
'Tis ever sweet through pines to see the sky
Blushing a deeper gold or darker blue.
'Tis ever sweet to lie
On the dry carpet of the needles brown,
And though the fanciful green lizard stir
And windy odours light as thistledown
Breathe from the lavdanon and lavender,
Half to forget the wandering and pain,
Half to remember days that have gone by,
And dream and dream that I am home again !

HYMN TO DIANA

Ben Jonson

QUEEN and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep.
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright !

Earth, let not thy envious shade
 Dare itself to interpose ;
 Cynthia's shining orb was made
 Heaven to clear when day did close.
 Bless us then with wishèd sight,
 Goddess excellently bright !

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
 And thy crystal-shining quiver :
 Give unto the flying hart
 Space to breathe, how short soever ;
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright !

NOW THE HUNGRY LION ROARS

Shakespeare

"Now the hungry lion roars,
 And the wolf howls the moon ;
 Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
 All with weary task fordone.
 Now the wasted brands do glow,
 Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
 Puts the wretch that lies in woe
 In remembrance of a shroud.
 Now it is the time of night
 That the graves, all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth his sprite,
 In the church-way paths to glide :
 And we fairies, that do run
 By the triple Hecate's team,
 From the presence of the sun,
 Following darkness like a dream,
 Now are frolic ; not a mouse
 Shall disturb this hallow'd house." . . .

THE NIGHT PIECE

Herrick

HER eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee ;
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will o' th' Wisp mislight thee ;
Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee ;
 But on, on thy way,
 Not making a stay,
Since ghost there is none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber ;
What though the moon does slumber ?
 The stars of the night
 Will lend thee their light,
Like tapers clear without number.

MOONLIT APPLES

John Drinkwater

At the top of the house the apples are laid in rows,
And the skylight lets the moonlight in, and those
Apples are deep-sea apples of green. There goes
 A cloud on the moon in the autumn night.

A mouse in the wainscot scratches, and scratches, and then
There is no sound at the top of the house of men
Or mice ; and the cloud is blown, and the moon again
 Dapples the apples with deep-sea light.

They are lying in rows there, under the gloomy beams ;
 On the sagging floor ; they gather the silver streams
 Out of the moon, those moonlit apples of dreams,
 And quiet is the steep stair under.

In the corridors under there is nothing but sleep.
 And stiller than ever on orchard boughs they keep
 Tryst with the moon, and deep is the silence, deep
 On moon-washed apples of wonder.

COME, SLEEP

Fletcher

COME, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
 Lock me in delight awhile ;
 Let some pleasing dreams beguile
 All my fancies ; that from thence
 I may feel an influence
 All my powers of care bereaving.

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
 Let me know some little joy !
 We that suffer long annoy
 Are contented with a thought
 Through an idle fancy wrought :
 O let my joys have some abiding !

A SONG OF ENCHANTMENT

Walter de la Mare

A song of Enchantment I sang me there,
 In a grey-green wood, by waters fair,
 Just as the words came up to me
 I sang it under the wildwood tree.

Widdershins turned I, singing it low,
Watching the wild birds come and go ;
No cloud in the deep dark blue to be seen
Under the thick-thatched branches green.

Twilight came : silence came :
The planet of Evening's silver flame ;
By darkening paths I wandered through
Thickets trembling with drops of dew.

But the music is lost and the words are gone
Of the song I sang as I sat alone,
Ages and ages have fallen on me—
On the wood and the pool and the elder tree.

THE HOST OF THE AIR

W. B. Yeats

O'DRISCOLL drove with a song
The wild duck and the drake
From the tall and the tufted reeds
Of the drear Hart Lake.

And he saw how the reeds grew dark
At the coming of night tide.
And dreamed of the long, dim hair
Of Bridget his bride.

He heard while he sang and dreamed,
A piper piping away,
And never was piping so sad,
And never was piping so gay.

And he saw young men and young girls
Who danced on a level place,
And Bridget his bride among them,
With a sad and a gay face.

The dancers crowded about him,
And many a sweet thing said,
And a young man brought him red wine
And a young girl white bread.

But Bridget drew him by the sleeve,
Away from the merry bands,
To old men playing at cards
With a twinkling of ancient hands.

The bread and the wine had a doom,
For these were the host of the air ;
He sat and played in a dream
Of her long, dim hair.

He played with the merry old men
And thought not of evil chance,
Until one bore Bridget his bride
Away from the merry dance.

He bore her away in his arms,
The handsomest young man there,
And his neck and his breast and his arms
Were drowned in her long, dim hair.

O'Driscoll scattered the cards
And out of his dream he awoke :
Old men and young men and young girls
Were gone like a drifting smoke ;

ut he heard high up in the air
A piper piping away,
And never was piping so sad,
And never was piping so gay.

THOMAS THE RHYMER

Anonymous

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;
A ferlie ¹ he spied wi' his ee ;
And there he saw a ladye bright
Come riding down by the Eildon-tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne ;
At ilka tett ² of her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pulled aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knec,
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven !
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belang to me ;
I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee."

"Harp and carp, ³ Thomas," she said,
"Harp and carp along wi' me ;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird ⁴ shall never daunton me,"
Syn he has kissed her rosy lips
All underneath the Eildon-tree.

¹ Ferlie—wonder.

³ Carp—chant.

² Tett—lock.

⁴ Weird—fate.

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

"Now ye maun go wi' me," she said,
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me ;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro' weal or woe as may chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed ;
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind :
And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on ;
The steed gaed swifter than the wind ;
Until they reach'd a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee ;
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers ?
That is the Path of Righteousness,
Though after it but few inquires.

"And see ye not that braid braid road,
That lies across the lily leven ? ¹
That is the Path of Wickedness,
Though some call it the Road to Heaven.

"And see ye not that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae ? ²
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

¹ Leven—lea, meadow.

² Brae—hillside.

"But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
 Whatever ye may hear and see;
 For, if ye speak word in Ellyn land,
 Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
 And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
 And they saw neither sun nor moon,
 But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk ¹ mirk night, and there was nae stern ² light,
 And they waded through red blude to the knee;
 For a' the blude that's shed on earth
 Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
 And she pu'd an apple frae a tree—
 "Take this for thy wage, true Thomas;
 It will give thee the tongue that can never lie."

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas said;
 "A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
 I neither dought ³ to buy nor sell,
 At fair or tryst where I may be.

"I dought neither speak to prince nor peer,
 Nor ask of grace from fair ladye."
 "Now hold thy peace!" the lady said,
 "For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
 And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
 And till seven years were gane and past
 True Thomas on earth was never seen.

¹ Mirk—dark, murky.

² Stern—star.

³ dought—could.

DREAM-PEDLARY

Thomas Lovell Beddoes

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy ?
Some cost a passing bell ;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy ?

A cottage lone and still,
With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
This would I buy.

THE LOTOS-EATERS

Tennyson

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemèd always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon ;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go ;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land : far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flushed : and, dewed with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset lingered low adown
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
A land where all things always seemed the same !
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;
And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
And sweet it was to dream of Father-land,
Of child, and wife, and slave ; but evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.

Then some one said, "We will return no more";
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone?
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

III

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo ! sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall, and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or
dreamful ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height ;
To hear each other's whispered speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath suffered change ;
For surely now our household hearths are cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.
The gods are hard to reconcile :
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,

Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twinèd vine—
To watch the emerald-coloured water falling
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath the pine.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone :
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust
is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when the surge
was scething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains
in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
curled
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
 and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
 and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong ;
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
 Sow the seed and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil ;
 Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whispered
 —down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and
 oar ;

Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

THE SONG OF SHADOWS

Walter de la Mare

SWEEP thy faint strings, Musician,
 With thy long lean hand ;
 Downward the starry tapers burn,
 Sinks soft the waning sand ;
 The old hound whimpers couched in sleep,
 The embers smoulder low ;
 Across the walls the shadows
 Come, and go.

Sweep softly thy strings, Musician,
 The minutes mount to hours ;
 Frost on the windless casement weaves
 A labyrinth of flowers ;

Ghosts linger in the darkening air,
 Harken at the open door ;
 Music hath called them, dreaming,
 Home once more.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Keats

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thine happiness,—
 'That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
 Cooled a long age in the deep delvèd earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !
 O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stainèd mouth ;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs ;
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
 Already with thee ! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Clustered around by all her starry Fays ;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
 ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast fading violets covered up in leaves ;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :
 Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !
 Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hillside ; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades :
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
 Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep ?

SUMMER EVENING

John Clare

THE frog half fearful jumps across the path,
 And little mouse that leaves its hole at eve
 Nimbles with timid dread beneath the swath :
 My rustling steps awhile their joys deceive,

Till past,—and then the cricket sings more strong,
 And grasshoppers in merry moods still wear
 The short night weary with their fretting song.
 Up from behind the molehill jumps the hare,
 Cheat of his chosen bed, and from the bank
 The yellowhammer flutters in short fears
 From off its nest hid in the grasses rank,
 And drops again when no more noise it hears.
 Thus nature's human link and endless thrall,
 Proud man, still seems the enemy of all.

A GARDEN

*Marvell**(Written after the Civil Wars)*

SEE how the flowers, as at parade,
 Under their colours stand display'd :
 Each regiment in order grows,
 That of the tulip, pink, and rose.
 But when the vigilant patrol
 Of stars walks round about the pole,
 Their leaves, that to the stalks are curl'd,
 Seem to their staves the ensigns furl'd.
 Then in some flower's belovèd hut
 Each bee, as sentinel, is shut,
 And sleeps so too ; but if once stirr'd
 She runs you through, nor asks the word.
 O thou, that dear and happy Isle,
 The garden of the world erewhile,
 Thou Paradise of the four seas,
 Which Heaven planted us to please,
 But, to exclude the world, did guard
 With wat'ry if not flaming sword ;
 What luckless apple did we taste
 To make us mortal and thee waste !
 Unhappy ! shall we never more
 That sweet militia restore,

When gardens only had their towers,
 And all thy garrisons were flowers ;
 When roses only arms might bear,
 And men did rosy garlands wear ?

MY HEART LEAPS UP

Wordsworth

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky :
 So was it when my life began ;
 So is it now I am a man ;
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die !
 The Child is father of the Man ;
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.

A THING OF BEAUTY (from *Endymion*)*Keats*

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever :
 Its loveliness increases ; it will never
 Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
 Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
 A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darken'd ways
 Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
 Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
 For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils
 With the green world they live in ; and clear rills

That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season ; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms :
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead :
All lovely tales that we have heard or read.
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour ; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
They always must be with us, or we die.

TO THE EVENING STAR

Blake

THOU Fair-haired Angel of the Evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy brilliant torch of love ; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed !
Smile on our loves ; and whilst thou drawest round
The curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that closes its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy West Wind sleep on
The lake ; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw ; then the wolf rages wide,
And the lion glares through the dun forest :
The fleeces of the flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew : protect them with thine influence.

THE KINGFISHER

W. H. Davies

*It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
And left thee all her lovely hues ;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.*

*Go you and, with such glorious hues,
Live with proud Peacocks in green parks ;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
Let every feather show its marks ;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.*

*Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain ;
Thou hast no proud, ambitious mind ;
I also love a quiet place
That's green, away from all mankind ;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.*

O LADY, LEAVE THY SILKEN THREAD

Hood

*O LADY, leave thy silken thread
And flowery tapestrie :
There're living roses on the bush,
And blossoms on the tree ;
Stoop where thou wilt, thy careless hand
Some random bud will meet ;
Thou canst not tread, but thou wilt find
The daisy at thy feet.*

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

'Tis like the birthday of the world,
 When earth was born in bloom ;
 The light is made of many dyes,
 The air is all perfume ;
 There're crimson buds, and white, and blue—
 The very rainbow showers
 Have turned to blossoms where they fell,
 And sown the earth with flowers.

There're fairy tulips in the east,
 The garden of the sun ;
 The very streams reflect the hues
 And blossom as they run :
 While Morn opes like a crimson rose,
 Still wet with pearly showers ;
 Then, lady, leave the silken thread
 Thou twinest into flowers.

TO HELEN

Edgar Allan Poe

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
 Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
 That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
 The weary, wayworn traveller bore
 To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
 Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
 Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
 To the glory that was Greece,
 And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo ! in yon brilliant window niche
 How statue-like I see thee stand,
 The agate lamp within thy hand !
 Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
 Are Holy Land.

CHRISTABEL

Coleridge

'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;
Tu-whit !—Tu-whoo !
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch ;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;
Some say she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?
The night is chilly but not dark.
The thin grey cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full ;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is grey :
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate ?
She had dreams all yester night
Of her own betrothèd knight ;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
"I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore ;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dream'd, ah ! woe betide !
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;
They cried—"La belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall !"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

KUBLA KHAN ; OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

(A FRAGMENT)

Coleridge

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh, that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover !
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced ;
Amid whose swift, half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sunk in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war !

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves ;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

Anonymous

THERE lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she ;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
 A week but barely ane,
 When word came to the carline wife ¹
 That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
 A week but barely three,
 When word came to the carline wife
 That her sons she'd never see.

"I wish the wind may never cease,
 Nor fashes ² in the flood,
 Till my three sons come hame to me,
 In earthly flesh and blood!"

It fell about the Martinmas,
 When nights are lang and mirk,
 The carline wife's three sons came hame,
 And their hats were o' the birk.³

It neither grew in syke ⁴ nor ditch,
 Nor yet in ony sheugh; ⁵
 But at the gates o' Paradise
 That birk grew fair eneugh.

* * * * *

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
 Bring water from the well!
 For a' my house shall feast this night,
 Since my three sons are well."

And she has made to them a bed,
 She's made it large and wide;
 And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
 Sat down at the bedside.

* * * * *

¹ Carline wife—prosperous old peasant woman. ² Fashes—troubles.

³ Birk—birch.

⁴ Syke—marsh.

⁵ Sheugh—furrow.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
 And up and crew the grey ;
 The eldest to the youngest said,
 " 'Tis time we were away."

The cock he hadna craw'd but once,
 And clapp'd his wings at a',
 When the youngest to the eldest said,
 " Brother, we must awa'.

" The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,
 The channerin'¹ worm doth chide ;
 Gin we be miss'd out o' our place,
 A sair pain we maun bide.

" Fare ye weel, my mother dear !
 Fareweel to barn and byre !
 And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
 That kindles my mother's fire !"

AUGURIES

Blake

A ROBIN Redbreast in a cage
 Puts all heaven in a rage.
 A dog starved at his master's gate
 Predicts the ruin of the State.
 A gamecock clipped and armed for fight
 Doth the rising sun affright.
 A horse misused upon the road
 Calls to Heaven for human blood.
 Each outcry of the wounded hare
 A fibre in the brain doth tear.
 A skylark wounded on the wing
 Doth make a cherub cease to sing.

¹ Channerin'—fretting.

He who shall hurt a little wren
Shall never be beloved by men.
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.
The lamb misused breeds public strife
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.
The bleat, the bark, the bellow, and roar,
Are waves that beat on Heaven's shore.
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Cæsar's laurel crown. . . .

THE TIGER

Blake

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes ?
On what wings dare he aspire ?
What the hand dare seize the fire ?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand forged thy dread feet ?

What the hammer ? What the chain ?
In what furnace was thy brain ?
What the anvil ? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see ?
Did He who made the lamb make thee ?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
 In the forests of the night,
 What immortal hand or eye
 Dare frame thy fearful symmetry ?

DUCKS

F. W. Harvey

I

FROM troubles of the world
 I turn to ducks,
 Beautiful comical things
 Sleeping or curled,
 Their heads beneath white wings
 By water cool,
 Or finding curious things
 To eat in various mucks
 Beneath the pool,
 Tails uppermost, or waddling
 Sailor-like on the shores
 Of ponds, or paddling
 —Left ! right !—with fanlike feet
 Which are for steady oars
 When they (white galleys) float,
 Each bird a boat,
 Rippling at will the sweet
 Wide waterway. . . .
 When night is fallen *you* creep
 Upstairs, but drakes and dillies
 Nest with pale water-stars,
 Moonbeams and shadow bars,
 And water-lilies :
 Fearful too much to sleep
 Since they've no locks
 To click against the teeth
 Of weasel and fox.

And warm beneath
Are eggs of cloudy green
Whence hungry rats and lean
Would stealthily suck
New life, but for the mien,
The bold, ferocious mien,
Of the mother-duck.

II

Yes, ducks are valiant things
On nests of twigs and straws,
And ducks are soothy things
And lovely on the lake,
When that the sunlight draws
Thereon their pictures dim
In colours cool.
And when beneath the pool
They dabble, and when they swim
And make their rippling rings,
O ducks are beautiful things!

But ducks are comical things—
As comical as you.
Quack !
They waddle round, they do.
They eat all sorts of things,
And then they quack.
By barn and stable and stack
They wander at their will,
But if you go too near
They look at you through black
Small topaz-tinted eyes
And wish you ill

Triangular and clear
 They leave their curious track
 In mud at the water's edge,
 And there amid the sedge
 And slime they gobble and peer,
 Saying, "Quack! quack!"

III

When God had finished the stars and whirl of coloured
 suns

He turned His mind from big things to fashion little ones :
 Beautiful tiny things (like daisies) He made, and then
 He made the comical ones in case the minds of men

Should stiffen and become

Dull, humourless, and glum,

And so forgetful of their Maker be

As to take even themselves—*quite seriously*.

Caterpillars and cats are lively and excellent puns :

All God's jokes are good—even the practical ones !

And as for the duck, I think God must have smiled a bit
 Seeing those bright eyes blink on the day He fashioned it.
 And He's probably laughing still at the sound that came
 out of its bill !

ODE TO EVENING

Collins

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
 May hope, chaste eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
 Like thy own solemn springs,
 Thy springs, and dying gales,

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
 Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
 With brede ethereal wove,
 O'erhang his wavy bed :

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return !

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge.
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheeted lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods.

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires ;
 And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all,
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

While spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
 And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest eve !
 While summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy lingering light ;

While sallow autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
 Or winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
 Shall fancy, friendship, science, rose-lipp'd health,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And hymn thy favourite name !

MIDNIGHT

Buckhurst

MIDNIGHT was come, when every vital thing
 With sweet sound sleep their weary limbs did rest,
 The beasts were still, the little birds that sing
 Now sweetly slept, beside their mother's breast,
 The old and all were shrouded in their nest :
 The waters calm, the cruel seas did cease,
 The woods, and fields, and all things held their peace.

The golden stars were whirled amid their race,
 And on the earth did laugh with twinkling light,
 When each thing, nestled in his resting-place,
 Forgot day's pain with pleasure of the night :
 The hare had not the greedy hounds in sight,
 The fearful deer of death stood not in doubt,
 The partridge dreamed not of the falcon's foot.

The ugly bear now minded not the stake,
 Nor how the cruel mastives do him tear ;
 The stag lay still unrousèd from the brake ;
 The foamy boar feared not the hunter's spear.
 All things were still, in desert, bush, and brere :
 With quiet heart, now from their travails ceased,
 Soundly they slept in midst of all their rest.

MUSIC COMES

John Freeman

Music comes
 Sweetly from the trembling string
 When wizard fingers sweep
 Dreamily, half asleep ;
 When through remembering reeds
 Ancient airs and murmurs creep,
 Oboe oboe following,
 Flute answering clear, high flute,
 Voices, voices—falling mute,
 And the jarring drums.
 At night I heard
 First a waking bird
 Out of the quiet darkness sing. . . .
 Music comes
 Strangely to the brain asleep !
 And I heard
 Soft, wizard fingers sweep
 Music from the trembling string,
 And through remembering reeds
 Ancient airs and murmurs creep ;
 Oboe oboe following,
 Flute calling clear, high flute,
 Voices faint, falling mute,
 And low, jarring drums ;
 Then all those airs
 Sweetly jangled—newly strange,
 Rich with change. . . .

Was it the wind in the reeds ?
 Did the wind range
 Over the trembling string ;
 Into flute and oboe pouring
 Solemn music ; sinking, soaring,
 Low to high,
 Up and down the sky ?
 Was it the wind jarring
 Drowsy, far-off drums ?

Strange to the brain asleep
 Music comes.

SONG IN THE SONGLESS

George Meredith

THEY have no song, the sedges dry,
 And still they sing.
 It is within my breast they sing,
 As I pass by.
 Within my breast they touch a string,
 They wake a sigh.
 There is but sound of sedges dry ;
 In me they sing.

A RUNNABLE STAG

John Davidson

WHEN the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,
 And apples began to be golden-skin'd,
 We harbour'd a stag in the Priory coomb,
 And we feather'd his trail up-wind, up-wind,
 We feather'd his trail up-wind—
 A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
 A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
 Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
 A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap !
And " Forwards ! " we heard the harbourer shout ;
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out,
From the underwood antler'd out,
By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beam'd and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North ;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth,
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.
" Tally ho ! tally ho ! " and the hunt was up,
The tufters whipp'd and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on,
And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

" Let your gelding be : if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt ;
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride
On hunters accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Accustom'd to bear the brunt,

Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three on top,
The right, the runnable stag."

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far ;
His antler'd crest, his cloven hoof,
Brow, bay, and tray, and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more,
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds, and all,
Of harbourer, hounds, and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turn'd at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep,
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep,
In a wonderful vision of sleep,
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag in a jewell'd bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
 And he open'd his nostrils wide again,
 And he toss'd his branching antlers high
 As he headed the hunt down the Charlock glen,
 As he raced down the echoing glen—
 For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
 For twenty miles, and five and five,
 Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
 The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
 Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
 Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
 Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,
 Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
 The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag,
 That slept at last in a jewell'd bed
 Under the sheltering ocean spread,
 The stag, the runnable stag.

THE OXEN

Thomas Hardy

CHRISTMAS Eve, and twelve of the clock.

“Now they are all on their knees,”
 An elder said as we sat in a flock
 By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek, mild creatures where
 They dwelt in their strawy pen,
 Nor did it occur to one of us there
 To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
 In these years! Yet, I feel,
 If some one said on Christmas Eve,
 “Come; see the oxen kneel

“In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,”
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

SUDDEN SHOWER

John Clare

BLACK grows the southern sky, betokening rain,
And humming hive-bees homeward hurry by :
They feel the change ; so let us shun the grain,
And take the broad road while our feet are dry.
Ay there, some drops fell moistening on my face,
And pattering on my hat—’tis coming nigh !
Let’s look about, and find a sheltering place.
The little things around us fear the sky,
And hasten through the grass to shun the shower,
Here stoops an ash-tree—hark ! the wind gets high,
But never mind ; this ivy, for an hour,
Rain as it may, will keep us dryly here :
That little wren knows well his sheltering bower,
Nor leaves his covert, though we come so near.

TO AUTUMN

Keats

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness !
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;
To bend with apples the moss’d cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o’er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers ;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozeings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barr'd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river salallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;
Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

THE POPLAR FIELD

Cowper

THE poplars are felled ; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade ;
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew ;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charmed me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man ;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

Robert Louis Stevenson

*A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit
And poplars at the garden foot :
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.*

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour ; here
The army of the stars appear.

The neighbour hollows, dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset ;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter-time
Silver the simple grass with rime ;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart-ruts beautiful ;
And when snow-bright the moor expands,
How shall your children clap their hands !
To make this earth, our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

GIPSIES

John Clare

THE snow falls deep ; the forest lies alone ;
The boy goes hasty for his load of brakes,¹
Then thinks about the fire and hurries back ;
The gipsy knocks his hands and tucks them up,
And seeks his squalid camp, half hid in snow,
Beneath the oak which breaks away the wind,
And bushes close in snow-like hovel warm ;
There tainted mutton wastes upon the coals,
And the half-wasted dog squats close and rubs,
Then feels the heat too strong, and goes aloof :
He watches well, but none a bit can spare,
And vainly waits the morsel thrown away.
'Tis thus they live—a picture to the place,
A quiet, pilfering, unprotected race.

¹ Brakes—bracken.

A WINTER SCENE (from *The Seasons*)*James Thomson*

THROUGH the hush'd air the whit'ning shower descends,
At first thin wavering ; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter-robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all ; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head ; and, ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep hid and chill,
Is one wild, dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats ; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth ; then hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is—
Till, more familiar grown, the table crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,

Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the black heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair ; then sad dispersed,
Dig for the wither'd herb, through heaps of snow.

INSCRIPTION FOR A BED IN KELMSCOTT

MANOR

William Morris

THE wind's on the wold
And the night is a-cold,
And Thames runs chill
'Twixt mead and hill.
But kind and dear
Is the old house here,
And my heart is warm
'Midst winter's harm.
Rest then and rest,
And think of the best
'Twixt summer and spring,
When all birds sing
In the town of the tree,
And ye lie in me,
And scarce dare move,
Lest the earth and its love
Should fade away
Ere the full of the day.
I am old and have seen
Many things that have been ;
Both grief and peace
And wane and increase.
No tale I tell
Of ill or well,
But this I say :
Night treadeth on day,
And for worst or best
Right good is rest.

A WINTER SONG

Burns

Up in the morning's no' for me,
Up in the morning early ;
When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
The drift is driving sairly ;
Sae loud and shrill's I hear the blast,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
A' day they fare but sparely ;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn ;
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

Shakespeare

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude ;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho ! sing, heigh ho ! unto the green holly :
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
Then heigh ho, the holly !
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot :
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.

Heigh ho ! sing, heigh ho ! unto the green holly :
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
Then heigh ho, the holly !
This life is most jolly.

SKATING (from *The Prelude*)*Wordsworth*

AND in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,
I heeded not their summons : happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six—I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures—the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle ; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless tree and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron, while far-distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the grassy plain ; and oftentimes,

When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
 In rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round !
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

A SONG

Shelley

A widow bird sate mourning for her love
 Upon a wintry bough ;
 The frozen wind crept on above,
 The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
 No flower upon the ground,
 And little motion in the air
 Except the mill-wheel's sound.

THE YEAR'S ROUND

Coventry Patmore

The crocus, while the days are dark,
 Unfolds its saffron sheen ;
 At April's touch the crudest bark
 Discovers gems of green.

Then sleep the seasons, full of night,
 While slowly swells the pod
 And rounds the peach, and in the night
 The mushroom bursts the sod.

The winter falls, the frozen rut
Is bound with silver bars ;
The snowdrift heaps against the hut,
And night is pierced with stars.

INSCRIPTION IN MELROSE ABBEY

THE earth goes to the earth glittering in gold,
The earth goes to the earth sooner than it wold ;
The earth builds on the earth castles and towers,
The earth says to the earth—All this is ours.

PROUD MAISIE

Scott

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

“Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me ? ”
—“ When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“ Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ? ”
—“ The grey-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“ The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady ! ”

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

Wordsworth

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me !

ROSE AYLMER

Landon

AH, what avails the sceptred race !
Ah, what the form divine !
What every virtue, every grace !
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

A RONDEAU

Leigh Hunt

JENNY kiss'd me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in ;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in !

Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kiss'd me.

MARY MORISON

Burns

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour !
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor :
How blythely wad I bide the stoure,¹
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw :
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said among them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die ?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee ?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown ;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

¹ Stoure—dust, turmoil.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

Shelley

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes ! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere ;
Destroyer and preserver ; hear, O hear !

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning ! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst : O hear !

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them ! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves : O hear !

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable ! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision—I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O ! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !
I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed !

A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is :
What if my leaves are falling like its own ?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit ! Be thou me, impetuous one !

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like wither'd leaves, to quicken a new birth ;
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind !
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ?

THE SOUL'S PILGRIMAGE

Raleigh

GIVE me my scallop-shell of quiet,
 My staff of faith to walk upon,
 My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
 My bottle of salvation,
 My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
 And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer;
 No other balm will there be given;
 Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
 Travelleth towards the land of heaven;
 Over the silver mountains,
 Where spring the nectar fountains:
 There will I kiss
 The bowl of bliss,
 And drink mine everlasting fill
 Upon every milken hill.
 My soul will be a-dry before;
 But, after, it will thirst no more.

SIR PATRICK SPENS

Anonymous

THE king sits in Dunfermline town,
 Drinking the blude-red wine:
 "O whaur will I get a skeely¹ skipper
 To sail this new ship of mine?"

O up and spake an eldern knight
 Sat at the king's right knee,—
 "Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
 That ever sail'd the sea."

¹ Skeely—skilful.

Our king has written a braid letter,
And seal'd it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

"To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis thou maun bring her hame."

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Sae loud, loud laughed he ;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his e'e.

"O wha is this has done this deed,
And tauld the king o' me,
To send us out, at this time of the year,
To sail upon the sea ?

"Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame."

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn,
Wi' a' the speed they may ;
They hae landed in Noroway,
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
In Noroway, but twae,
When that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say,—

"Ye Scottishmen spend a' our king's goud,
And a' our queenis fee."

"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud!
Fu' loud I hear ye lie.

"For I brought as much white monie,
As gane ¹ my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou ² o' gude red goud,
Out o'er the sea wi' me.

"Mak ready, mak ready, my merry-men a'!
Our gude ship sails the morn."

"Now, ever alack, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

"I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm."

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league, but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly ³ grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the topmasts lap,
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam ower the broken ship,
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O where will I get a gude sailor,
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall topmast,
To see if I can spy land?"

¹ Gane—serves.

² Half-fou—one-eighth of a peck.

³ Gurly—wild, rough.

The ladies wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake of their true loves ;
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang may the ladiés sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand !

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
Wi' their goud kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves !
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half ower, half ower to Aberdour
It's fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

RIDING TOGETHER

William Morris

For many, many days together
The wind blew steady from the East ;
For many days hot grew the weather,
About the time of Our Lady's Feast.

For many days we rode together,
Yet met we neither friend nor foe ;
Hotter and clearer grew the weather,
Steadily did the East wind blow.

We saw the trees in the hot, bright weather,
Clear-cut with shadows very black,
As freely we rode on together
With helms unlaced and bridles slack.

And often as we rode together,
We, looking down the green-banked stream,
Saw flowers in the sunny weather,
And saw the bubble-making bream.

And in the night lay down together,
And hung above our heads the rood,
Or watch'd night long in the dewy weather,
The while the moon did watch the wood.

Our spears stood bright and thick together,
Straight out the banners stream'd behind,
As we galloped on in the sunny weather,
With faces turn'd towards the wind.

Down sank our three score spears together,
As thick we saw the pagans ride ;
His eager face in the clear, fresh weather,
Shone out that last time by my side.

Up the sweep of the bridge we dash'd together,
It rock'd to the crash of the meeting spears,
Down rain'd the buds of the dear spring weather,
The elm-tree flowers fell like tears.

There, as we roll'd and writhed together,
I threw my arms above my head,
For close by my side, in the lovely weather,
I saw him reel and fall back dead.

I and the slayer met together,
He waited the death-stroke there in his place,
With thoughts of death, in the lovely weather,
Gapingly mazed at my madden'd face.

Madly I fought as we fought together ;
In vain : the little Christian band
The pagans drown'd, as in stormy weather,
The river drowns low-lying land.

They bound my blood-stain'd hands together,
They bound his corpse to nod by my side ;
Then on we rode in the bright March weather,
With clash of cymbals did we ride.

We ride no more, no more together ;
My prison bars are thick and strong,
I take no heed of any weather,
The sweet Saints grant I live not long.

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

Anonymous

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries ;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea !

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me !

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my love dropt down and spak nae mair ;
I laid her down wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea,

I lighted down, my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare,
 I'll mak a garland o' thy hair
 Shall bind my heart for evermair,
 Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies,
 Night and day on me she cries ;
 Out of my bed she bids me rise,
 Says, " Haste, and come to me ! "

O Helen fair ! O Helen chaste !
 If I were with thee, I'd be blest,
 Where thou lies low and taks thy rest
 On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
 A winding sheet drawn owre my een,
 And I in Helen's arms lying,
 On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies,
 Night and day on me she cries ;
 And I am weary of the skies,
 For her sake that died for me.

SAYS TWEED TO TILL

Anonymous

Says Tweed to Till—
 " What gars ye rin sae still ? "
 Says Till to Tweed—
 " Though ye rin with speed
 And I rin slaw,
 For ae man that ye droon,
 I droon twa."

SHAMEFUL DEATH

William Morris

THERE were four of us about that bed ;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride ;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit pass'd away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely grey.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here ;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinion'd fast,
Sir John the knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

I am threescore and ten,
 And my hair is all turn'd grey,
 But I met Sir John of the Fen
 Long ago on a summer day,
 And am glad to think of the moment when
 I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
 And my strength is mostly pass'd,
 But long ago I and my men,
 When the sky was overcast,
 And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of the fen,
 Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,
 I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
 A good knight and a true,
 And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

Coleridge

PART I

An ancient
 Mariner
 meeteth three
 gallants
 bidden to a
 wedding-feast,
 and detaineth
 one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 "By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
 And I am next of kin;
 The guests are met, the feast is set:
 May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 "There was a ship," quoth he.
 "Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!"
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child :
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
 He cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner :

“ The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he !
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon——”
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
 Red as a rose is she ;
 Nodding their heads before her goes
 The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music ; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
 Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner :

The ship drawn by a storm toward the South Pole. " And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward ay we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen. And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound !

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality. At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steer'd us through !

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
 The Albatross did follow,
 And every day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

And lo ! the
 Albatross
 proveth a bird
 of good omen,
 and followeth
 the ship as it re-
 turned north-
 ward through
 fog and floating
 ice.

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
 It perch'd for vespers nine ;
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
 Glimmer'd the white moonshine."

" God save thee, ancient Mariner,
 From the fiends that plague thee thus !—
 Why look'st thou so ?"—" With my crossbow
 I shot the Albatross.

The ancient
 Mariner in-
 hospitably
 killeth the pious
 bird of good
 omen.

PART II

" The Sun now rose upon the right :
 Out of the sea came he,
 Still hid in mist, and on the left
 Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,
 Nor any day for food or play
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

And I had done a hellish thing,
 And it would work 'em woe :
 For all averr'd I had kill'd the bird
 That made the breeze to blow.
 Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay
 That made the breeze to blow !

His shipmates
 cry out against
 the ancient
 Mariner for
 killing the bird
 of good luck.

But when the fog cleared off,
 they justify the same, and thus
 make themselves accomplices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 The glorious Sun uprist :
 Then all averr'd I had kill'd the bird
 That brought the fog and mist.
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze continues ; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew.
 The furrow follow'd free ;
 We were the first that ever burst
 Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
 'Twas sad as sad could be ;
 And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody Sun, at noon,
 Right up above the mast did stand,
 No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
 We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
 As idle as a painted ship
 Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
 And all the boards did shrink ;
 Water, water, everywhere,
 Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
 That ever this should be !
 Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
 Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout,
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so ;
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

departed souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

A Spirit had
followed them ;
one of the in-
visible inhabit-
ants of this
planet, neither

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah ! well-a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

The shipmates,
in their sore
distress, would
fain throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner : in
sign whereof
they hang the
dead sea-bird
round his neck

PART III

" There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time !
How glazed each weary eye !
When, looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a sign
in the element
afar off.

At first it seem'd a little speck,
And then it seem'd a mist ;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
 And still it near'd and near'd :
 As if it dodged a water-sprite,
 It plung'd, and tack'd, and veer'd.

At its nearer
 approach, it
 seemeth him
 to be a ship ;
 and at a dear
 ransom he
 freeth his
 speech from
 the bonds of
 thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 We could not laugh nor wail ;
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
 I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
 And cried, ' A sail ! a sail ! '

A flash of joy ;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call :
 Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in,
 As they were drinking all.

And horror
 follows. For
 can it be a
 ship that comes
 onward without
 wind or tide ?

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
 Hither to work us weal—
 Without a breeze, without a tide,
 She steadies with upright keel !

The western wave was all aflame,
 The day was well-nigh done !
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad, bright Sun ;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth him
 but the skele-
 ton of a ship.

And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace !),
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
 With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud),
 How fast she nears and nears !
 Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
 Like restless gossameres ?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
 Did peer, as through a grate ?
 And is that Woman all her crew ?
 Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
 Is Death that Woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
 Her locks were yellow as gold :
 Her skin was as white as leprosy,
 The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
 Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
 And the twain were casting dice ;
 'The game is done ! I've won ! I've won !'
 Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :
 At one stride comes the dark ;
 With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
 Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listen'd and look'd sideways up !
 Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
 My life-blood seem'd to sip !
 The stars were dim, and thick the night,
 The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd
 white ;

From the sails the dew did drip—
 Till clomb above the eastern bar
 The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
 Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogg'd Moon,
 Too quick for groan or sigh,
 Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
 And cursed me with his eye.

And its ribs
 are seen as
 bars on the
 face of the
 setting Sun.
 The Spectre-
 Woman and her
 Death-mate,
 and no other,
 on board the
 skeleton ship.
 Like vessel,
 like crew !

Death and
 Life-in-Death
 have dived for
 the ship's crew,
 and she (the
 latter) winneth
 the ancient
 Mariner.
 No twilight
 within the
 courts of the
 Sun.

At the rising
 of the Moon,

One after
 another,

His shipmates
drop down
dead.

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropp'd down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly—
They fled to bliss or woe !
And every soul, it pass'd me by
Like the whizz of my crossbow ! ”

PART IV

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a spirit
is talking to
him.

“ I fear thee, ancient Mariner !
I fear thy skinny hand !
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribb'd sea-sand.

But the an-
cient Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to re-
late his horrible
penance

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown.”—
“ Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest !
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea !
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful !
And they all dead did lie :
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on ; and so did I.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away ;
I look'd upon the rotting deck
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray ;
 But or ever a prayer had gusht,
 A wicked whisper came, and made
 My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
 And the balls like pulses beat ;
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
 Lay like a load on my weary eye,
 And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
 Nor rot nor reek did they :
 The look with which they look'd on me
 Had never pass'd away.

But the curse
 liveth for him
 in the eye of the
 dead men.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
 A spirit from on high ;
 But oh ! more horrible than that
 Is the curse in a dead man's eye !
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
 And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
 And nowhere did abide ;
 Softly she was going up,
 And a star or two beside—

In his loneli-
 ness and
 fixedness he
 yearneth
 towards the
 journeying

Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward ; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
 Like April hoar-frost spread ;
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
 The charm'd water burnt away
 A still and awful red.

By the light
of the Moon
he beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watch'd the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

He blesteth
them in his
heart.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,
And I bless'd them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

The spell
begins to
break.

The selfsame moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

" O sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
ancient
Mariner is
refreshed
with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew ;
And when I awoke, it rain'd.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank ;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessèd ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 It did not come anear ;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

He heareth
 sounds and
 seeth strange
 sights and
 commotions
 in the sky and
 the element.

The upper air burst into life ;
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen ;
 To and fro they were hurried about !
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
 And the rain pour'd down from one black
 cloud ;
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side ;
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

*The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on !
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 The dead men gave a groan.*

The bodies of
 the ship's crew
 are inspired,
 and the ship
 moves on ,

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
 It had been strange, even in a dream,
 To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on ;
 Yet never a breeze up-blew ;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
 Where they were wont to do ;
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee :
 The body and I pull'd at one rope,
 But he said naught to me."

But not by
 the souls of
 the men, nor
 by demons of
 earth or middle
 air, but by a
 blessed troop
 of angelic
 spirits, sent
 down by the
 invocation of
 the guardian
 saint.

" I fear thee, ancient Mariner ! "
 " Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest :
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
 Which to their corses came again,
 But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawn'd—they dropp'd their arms,
 And cluster'd round the mast ;
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
 And from their bodies pass'd.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
 Then darted to the Sun ;
 Slowly the sounds came back again,
 Now mix'd, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
 I heard the skylark sing ;
 Sometimes all little birds that are,
 How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
 With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,
 Now like a lonely flute ;
 And now it is an angel's song,
 That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
 A pleasant noise till noon,
 A noise like of a hidden brook
 In the leafy month of June,
 That to the sleeping woods all night
 Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sail'd on,
 Yet never a breeze did breathe :
 Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
 Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
 From the land of mist and snow,
 The Spirit slid : and it was he
 That made the ship to go.
 The sails at noon left off their tune,
 And the ship stood still also.

The lone-some
 Spirit from the
 South Pole
 carries on the
 ship as far as
 the Line, in
 obedience to
 the angelic
 troop, but still
 requireth
 vengeance.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
 Had fix'd her to the ocean :
 But in a minute she 'gan stir,
 With a short, uneasy motion—
 Backwards and forwards half her length
 With a short, uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
 She made a sudden bound :
 It flung the blood into my head,
 And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life return'd,
I heard, and in my soul discern'd
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice :

" 'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?'

Second Voice :

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go ;
 For she guides him smooth or grim.
 See, brother, see ! how graciously
 She looketh down on him.'

First Voice :

' But why drives on that ship so fast,
 Without or wave or wind ? '

Second Voice :

' The air is cut away before,
 And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly ! more high, more high !
 Or we shall be belated :
 For slow and slow that ship will go,
 When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The Mariner
 hath been cast
 into a trance ;
 for the angelic
 power causeth
 the vessel to
 drive north-
 ward faster
 than human
 life could
 endure.

I woke, and we were sailing on
 As in a gentle weather :
 'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high ;
 The dead men stood together.

The super-
 natural motion
 is retarded ;
 the Mariner
 awakes, and
 his penance
 begins anew.

All stood together on the deck,
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter :
 All fix'd on me their stony eyes,
 That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never pass'd away :
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
 Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt : once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And look'd far forth, yet little saw
 Of what had else been seen—

The curse is,
 finally expi-
 ated.

THE QUEEN'S TREASURES

Like one that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turn'd round, walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows a frightful fiend
 Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—
 It mingled strangely with my fears,
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
 Yet she sail'd softly too :
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
 On me alone it blew.

And the
 ancient
 Mariner be-
 holdeth his
 native country.

O dream of joy ! is this indeed
 The lighthouse top I see ?
 Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
 Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
 And I with sobs did pray—
 O let me be awake, my God !
 Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn !
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

The angelic
spirits leave the
dead bodies,

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
O Christ ! what saw I there !

And appear in
their own
forms of light.

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
 My forest-brook along ;
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
 That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—
 (The Pilot made reply)
 I am a-fear'd.'—'Push on, push on !'
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirr'd ;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,
 Still louder and more dread :
 It reach'd the ship, it split the bay ;
 The ship went down like lead.

The ship sud-
 dently sinketh.

Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,
 Which sky and ocean smote,
 Like one that hath been seven days drown'd
 My body lay afloat ;
 But swift as dreams, myself I found
 Within the Pilot's boat.

The ancient
 Mariner is
 saved in the
 Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
 The boat spun round and round ;
 And all was still, save that the hill
 Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shriek'd
 And fell down in a fit ;
 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
 And pray'd where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
 Who now doth crazy go,
 Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
 His eyes went to and fro.
 ' Ha ! ha ! ' quoth he, ' full plain I see
 The Devil knows how to row.'

*And now, all in my own countree,
 I stood on the firm land !
 The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
 And scarcely he could stand.*

The ancient
 Mariner
 earnestly en-
 treateth the
 Hermit to
 shrieve him ;
 and the pen-
 ance of life
 falls on him.

' O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !'
 The Hermit cross'd his brow.
 ' Say quick,' quoth he, ' I bid thee say—
 What manner of man art thou ?'

*Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
 With a woeful agony,
 Which forced me to begin my tale ;
 And then it left me free.*

And ever
 and anon
 throughout
 his future life
 an agony
 constraineth
 him to travel
 from land to
 land ;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
 That agony returns :
 And till my ghastly tale is told,
 This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
 I have strange power of speech ;
 That moment that his face I see,
 I know the man that must hear me :
 To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
 The wedding-guests are there :

But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are :
And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea :
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone : and now the Wedding-Guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunn'd,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

And to teach,
by his own
example,
love and
reverence to
all things
that God
made and
loveth.

A SONG

Whittier

Others shall sing the song ;
 Others shall right the wrong ;
 Finish what I begin,
 And all I fail of, win.

What matter I or they ;
 Mine or another's day ;
 So the right word be said,
 And life the sweeter made ?

THE SPLENDOUR FALLS

Tennyson

The splendour falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story ;
 The long light shakes across the lakes
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
 Blow, bugle ! answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river :
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
 And grow for ever and for ever.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

ULYSSES

Tennyson

It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
 I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
 Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
 That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
 Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
 I am a part of all that I have met ;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains : but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this grey spirit yearning in desire
 To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
 This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port : the vessel puffs her sail :
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

THE OLD SHIPS

James Elroy Flecker

I HAVE seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire ;
And all those ships were certainly so old
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit, and corpses up the hold !
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that same
(Fished up beyond Ææa, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing and forgot his course.
It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows ?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

DAVID SINGS TO SAUL (*from Saul*)*Browning*

Oh, the wild joys of living ! the leaping from rock up to
rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool
silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust
divine,
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught
of wine,
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes
tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well.
How good is man's life, the mere living ! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy !
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword
thou didst guard
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious
reward ?
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as
men sung
The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint
tongue
Joining in while it could to the witness, " Let one more
attest,
I have lived, seen God's hand thro' a lifetime, and all was
for best " ?
Then they sung thro' their tears in strong triumph, not
much, but the rest.
And thy brothers, the help and the contest, the working
whence grew
Such result as, from seething grape-bundles, the spirit
strained true :

And the friends of thy boyhood—that boyhood of wonder
 and hope,
 Present promise and wealth of the future beyond the eye's
 scope—
 Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch ; a people is thine ;
 And all gifts, which the world offers singly, on one head
 combine !
 On one head, all the beauty and strength, love and rage
 (like the throe
 That a-work in the rock, helps its labour and lets the gold
 go),
 High ambition and deeds which surpass it, fame crowning
 them—all
 Brought to blaze on the head of one creature—King Saul !

WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

James Elroy Flecker

WE are they who come faster than fate : we are they who
 ride early or late :
 We storm at your ivory gate : Pale Kings of the Sunset,
 beware !
 Not on silk nor in samet we lie, nor in curtained solemnity
 die
 Among women who chatter and cry, and children who
 mumble a prayer.
 But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a
 shout, and we tramp
 With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the
 wind in our hair.

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the forts of
 Merou and Balghar,
 Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on the
 ruins of Rum.

We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God
we will go there again ;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters
of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men were
afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker
of doom ;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a
few of ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and
strong :
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a
desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry
thundered along :
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our
battle sheered up like a wave
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God
in our song.

SONNET

J. C. Squire

THERE was an Indian, who had known no change,
Who strayed content along a sunlit beach
Gathering shells. He heard a sudden strange
Commingled noise : looked up : and gasped for speech.
For in the bay, where nothing was before,
Moved on the sea, by magic, huge canoes,
With bellying cloths on poles, and not one oar,
And fluttering coloured signs and clambering crews.

And he, in fear, this naked man alone,
His fallen hands forgetting all their shells,
His lips gone pale, knelt low behind a stone,

And stared, and saw, and did not understand,
Columbus's doom-burdened caravels
Slant to the shore, and all their seamen land.

THE BONNY EARL OF MURRAY

Anonymous

Yf Highlands and ye Lawlands,
O where hae ye been ?
They hae slain the Earl of Murray,
And hae laid him on the green.

Now wae be to thee, Huntley,
And wherefore did you sac ?
I bade you bring him wi' you,
But forbade you him to slay.

He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring ;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
O he might hae been a king !

He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the ba' ;
And the bonny Earl of Murray
Was the flower amang them a' !

He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the glove ;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
He was the queen's luvè !

O lang will his Lady
Look owre the Castle Downe,
Ere she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding through the town.

MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL

Burns

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie :
Macpherson's time will not be long
On yonder gallows tree.

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He played a spring ¹ and danced it round,
Below the gallows tree.

Oh, what is death but parting breath ?
On mony a bloody plain
I've dared his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again !

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword,
And there's no a man in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.

I've lived a life of sturt ² and strife ;
I die by treacherie :
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avengèd be.

Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky !
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dares not die !

¹ Spring—a dance-tune.

² Sturt—violence.

PIBROCH OF DONUIL DHU

Scott

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons !
Come in your war-array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlocky.
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter ;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar ;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges ;
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadsword and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended.
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded :
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page, and groom,
Tenant and master,

Fast they come, fast they come,
 See how they gather !
 Wide waves the eagle plume
 Blended with heather.
 Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
 Forward each man set !
 Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
 Knell for the onset !

LOCK THE DOOR, LARISTON

James Hogg

" Lock the door, Lariston, Lion of Liddesdale ;
 Lock the door, Lariston, Lowther comes on ;
 The Armstrongs are flying,
 The widows are crying,
 The Castletown's burning, and Oliver's gone !

Lock the door, Lariston,—high on the weather-gleam
 See how the Saxon plumes bob on the sky—
 Yemen and carbineer,
 Billman and halberdier,
 Fierce is the foray, and far is the cry !

Bewcastle brandishes high his broad scimitar ;
 Ridley is riding his fleet-footed grey ;
 Hidley and Howard there,
 Wandale and Windermere ;
 Lock the door, Lariston ; hold them at bay.

Why dost thou smile, noble Elliot of Lariston ?
 Why does the joy-candle gleam in thine eye ?
 Thou bold Border ranger,
 Beware of thy danger ;
 Thy foes are relentless, determined, and nigh."

Jack Elliot raised up his steel bonnet and lookit,
His hand grasp'd the sword with a nervous embrace ;
 " Ah, welcome, brave foemen,
 On earth there are no men
More gallant to meet in the foray or chase !

Little know you of the hearts I have hidden here ;
Little know you of our moss-troopers' might—
 Linhope and Sorbie true,
 Sunhope and Milburn too,
Gentle in manner, but lions in fight !

I have Mangerton, Ogilvie, Raeburn, and Netherbie,
Old Sim of Whitram, and all his array ;
 Come all Northumberland,
 Teesdale and Cumberland,
Here at the Breaken tower end shall the fray ! "

Scowled the broad sun o'er the links of green Liddesdale,
Red as the beacon-light tipped he the wold ;
 Many a bold martial eye
 Mirror'd that morning sky,
Never more oped on his orbit of gold.

Shrill was the bugle's note, dreadful the warrior's shout,
Lances and halberds in splinters were borne ;
 Helmet and hauberk then,
 Braved the claymore in vain,
Buckler and armlet in shivers were shorn.

See how they wane—the proud files of the Windermere !
Howard ! ah, woe to thy hopes of the day !
 Hear the wide welkin rend,
 While the Scots' shouts ascend—
" Elliot of Lariston, Elliot for aye ! "

WAR SONG OF DINAS VAWR *Thomas Love Peacock*

THE mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter ;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition ;
We met an host and quelled it ;
We forced a strong position,
And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us ;
We met them and o'erthrew them :
They struggled hard to beat us ;
But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king marched forth to catch us :
His rage surpassed all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars ;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering,
Spilt blood enough to swim in ;
We orphaned many children,
And widowed many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen,
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
And the head of him who owned them :
Ednyfed, King of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us ;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow our chorus.

THE FAREWELL (Old Song)

Version by Burns

It was a' for our rightfu' King
We left fair Scotland's strand;
It was a' for our rightfu' King
We e'er saw Irish land,
My dear—
We e'er saw Irish land.

Now a' is done that men can do,
And a' is done in vain ;
My love and native land, farewell !
For I maun cross the main,
My dear—
For I maun cross the main.

He turn'd him right and round about
Upon the Irish shore ;
And gave his bridle-reins a shake,
With Adieu for evermore,
My dear—
With Adieu for evermore !

The sodger frae the wars returns,
The sailor frae the main ;
But I hae parted frae my love,
Never to meet again,
My dear—
Never to meet again.

When day is gane, and night is come,
 And a' folk bound to sleep,
 I think on him that's far awa',
 The lee-lang night, and weep,
 My dear—
 The lee-lang night, and weep.

A JACOBITE'S EXILE (1746)

Swinburne

THE weary day rins down and dies,
 The weary night wears through :
 And never an hour is fair wi' flower,
 And never a flower wi' dew.

I would the day were night for me,
 I would the night were day :
 For then would I stand in my ain fair land,
 As now in dreams I may.

O lordly flow the Loire and Seine,
 And loud the dark Durance :
 But bonnier shine the braes of Tyne
 Than a' the fields of France ;
 And the waves of Till that speak sae still
 Gleam goodlier where they glance.

O weel were they that fell fighting
 On dark Drumossie's day¹ :
 They keep their hame ayont the faem,
 And we die far away.

O sound they sleep, and saft, and deep,
 But night and day wake we ;
 And ever between the sea-banks green
 Sounds loud the sundering sea.

¹ Drumossie's day—battle of Culloden, 1746.

And ill we sleep, sae sair we weep,
But sweet and fast sleep they ;
And the mool¹ that haps them roun' and laps them
Is e'en their country's clay ;
But the land we tread that are not dead
Is strange as night by day.

Strange as night in a strange man's sight,
Though fair as dawn it be :
For what is here that a stranger's cheer
Should yet wax blithe to see ?

The hills stand steep, the dells lie deep,
The fields are green and gold ;
The hill-streams sing, and the hill-sides ring
As ours at home of old.

But hills and flowers are nane of ours,
And ours are oversea :
And the kind, strange land whereon we stand,
It wotsna what were we
Or ever we came wi' scathe and shame,
To try what end might be.

Scathe, and shame, and a waefu' name,
And a weary time and strange,
Have they that seeing a weird² for dreeing³
Can die, and cannot change.

Shame and scorn may we thole⁴ that mourn,
Though sair be they to dree :
But ill may we bide the thoughts we hide,
Mair keen than wind and sea.

¹ Mool—mould.

³ Dree—bear.

² Weird—fate, destiny.

⁴ Thole—suffer patiently.

Ill may we thole the night's watches,
And ill the weary day :
And the dreams that keep the gates of sleep,
A waefu' gift gie they ;
For the sangs they sing us, the sights they bring us,
The morn blaws all away.

On Aikenshaw the sun blinks braw,
The burn rins blithe and fain¹ :
There's nought wi' me I wadna gie
To look thereon again.

On Keilder-side the wind blaws wide ;
There sounds nae hunting-horn
That rings sae sweet as the winds that beat
Round banks where Tyne is born.

The Wansbeck sings with all her springs,
The bents and braes give ear ;
But the wood that rings wi' the sang she sings
I may not see nor hear ;
For far and far thae blithe burns are,
And strange is a' thing near.

The light there lightens, the day there brightens,
The loud wind there lives free :
Nae light comes nigh me or wind blaws by me
That I wad hear or see.

But O gin I were there again,
Afar ayont the faem,
Cauld and dead in the sweet saft bed
That haps my sires at hame !

¹ Fain—glad, joyfully.

We'll see nae mair the sea-banks fair,
 And the sweet, grey, gleaming sky,
 And the lordly strand of Northumberland,
 And the goodly towers thereby :
 And none shall know but the winds that blow
 The graves wherein we lie.

HOME NO MORE HOME TO ME

Robert Louis Stevenson

HOME no more home to me, whither must I wander ?
 Hunger my driver, I go where I must.
 Cold blows the winter wind over hill and heather ;
 Thick drives the rain, and my roof is in the dust.
 Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof-tree,
 The true word of welcome was spoken in the door—
 Dear days of old, with the faces in the firelight,
 Kind folks of old, you come again no more.

Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,
 Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child,
 Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland ;
 Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild.
 Now, when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,
 Lone stands the house, and the chimney-stone is cold.
 Lone let it stand, now the friends are all departed,
 The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old.

Spring shall come, come again, calling up the moor-fowl,
 Spring shall bring the sun and rain, bring the bees and
 flowers,
 Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,
 Soft flow the stream through the even-flowing hours ;
 Fair the day shine as it shone on my childhood—
 Fair shine the day on the house with open door ;
 Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney—
 But I go for ever and come again no more.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

Southey

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun ;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found ;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by ;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
" Who fell in the great victory.

I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about ;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men," said he,
" Were slain in that great victory."

" Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin he cries,
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes ;
" Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout ;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by ;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly :
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then
And new-born baby died :
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won ;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun :
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene ;"
"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing !"
Said little Wilhelmine ;
"Nay . . . nay . . . my little girl," quoth he,
"It was a famous victory.

Through all Philistian bounds ; to Israel
Honour hath left and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion ;
To himself and father's house eternal fame ;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast ; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame ; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Soaked in his enemies' blood, and from the stream
Which lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off
The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay),
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend,
With silent obsequy and funeral train,
Home to his father's house. There will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung and acts enrolled
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour and adventure high."

ELLEN'S SONG

Scott

SOLDIER, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking ;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.

In our Isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more :
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking.
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing ;
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

Coleridge

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn ?
Where may the grave of that good man be ?
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree.
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust ;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

DEATH THE LEVELLER

Shirley

THE glories of our blood and state
 Are shadows, not substantial things :
 There is no armour against fate :
 Death lays his icy hand on kings :
 Sceptre and crown
 Must tumble down,
 And in the dust be equal made
 With the poor crookèd scythe and spade.
 Some men with swords may reap the field,
 And plant fresh laurels where they kill ;
 But their strong nerves at last must yield :
 They tame but one another still.
 Early or late
 They stoop to fate,
 And must give up their murmuring breath
 When they, pale captives, creep to death.
 The garlands wither on their brow—
 Then boast no more your mighty deeds !
 Upon Death's purple altar now
 See where the victor-victim bleeds !
 All heads must come
 To the cold tomb :
 Only the actions of the just
 Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

WE ARE THE MUSIC MAKERS *Arthur O'Shaughnessy*

WE are the music makers,
 And we are the dreamers of dreams,
 Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
 And sitting by desolate streams ;—
 World-losers and world-forsakers,
 On whom the pale moon gleams :
 Yet we are the movers and shakers
 Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of the fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory :
One man, with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown ;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth ;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth ;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation ;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming
Unearthly, impossible seeming—
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising ;
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going :
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart ;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling ;
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
The dream that was scorned yesterday.

FLANNAN ISLE

Wilfred Wilson Gibson

"THOUGH three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steer'd under the lea, we caught
No glimmer through the night !"

A passing ship at dawn had brought
The news ; and quickly we set sail,
To find out what strange thing might ail
The keepers of the deep sea light.

The winter day broke blue and bright,
With glancing sun and glancing spray,
As o'er the swell our boat made way,
As gallant as a gull in flight.

But, as we near'd the lonely isle ;
And look'd up at the naked height ;
And saw the lighthouse towering while
With blinded lantern, that all night
Had never shot a spark
Of comfort through the dark,
So ghostly in the cold sunlight
It seem'd, that we were struck the while
With wonder all too dread for words.

And, as into the tiny creek
We stole beneath the hanging crag,
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—
Too big, by far, in my belief,
For guillemot or shag—
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright
Upon a half-tide reef :
But, as we near'd, they plunged from sight
Without a sound, or spurt of white.

And still too 'mazed to speak,
We landed ; and made fast the boat ;
And climb'd the track in single file,
Each wishing he was safe afloat,
On any sea, however far,
So it be far from Flannan Isle :
And still we seem'd to climb and climb,
As though we'd lost all count of time,
And so must climb for evermore.
Yet, all too soon, we reached the door—
The black, sun-blister'd lighthouse-door,
That gaped for us ajar.

As, on the threshold, for a spell,
We paused, we seem'd to breathe the smell
Of limewash and of tar,
Familiar as our daily breath,
As though 'twere some strange scent of death :
And so, yet wondering, side by side,
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied :
And each with black foreboding eyed
The door, ere we should fling it wide,
To leave the sunlight for the gloom :
Till, plucking courage up, at last,
Hard on each other's heels we pass'd
Into the living-room.

Yet, as we crowded through the door,
We only saw a table, spread
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread ;
But all untouch'd ; and no one there :
As though, when they sat down to eat,
Ere they could even taste,
Alarm had come ; and they in haste
Had risen and left the bread and meat ;
For at the table-head a chair
Lay tumbled on the floor.

We listen'd ; but we only heard
The feeble cheeping of a bird
That starved upon its perch :
And, listening still, without a word,
We set about our hopeless search.

We hunted high, we hunted low,
And soon ransack'd the empty house ;
Then o'er the Island, to and fro,
We ranged, to listen and to look
In every cranny, cleft, or nook
That might have hid a bird or mouse :
But, though we searched from shore to shore,
We found no sign in any place :
And soon again stood face to face
Before the gaping door :
And stole into the room once more
As frighten'd children steal.

Aye : though we hunted high and low,
And hunted everywhere,
Of the three men's fate we found no trace
Of any kind in any place,
But a door ajar, and an untouch'd meal,
And an overtoppled chair.

And, as we listen'd in the gloom
Of that forsaken living-room—
A chill clutch on our breath—
We thought how ill-chance came to all
Who kept the Flannan Light :
And how the rock had been the death
Of many a likely lad :
How six had come to a sudden end,
And three had gone stark mad :
And one whom we'd all known as friend
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall :
And long we thought
On the three we sought,
And of what might yet befall.

Like curs a glance has brought to heel,
We listen'd, flinching there :
And look'd, and look'd, on the untouch'd meal
And the overtoppled chair.

We seem'd to stand for an endless while,
Though still no word was said,
Three men alive on Flannan Isle,
Who thought on three men dead.

SONG FOR ALL SEAS, ALL SHIPS

Walt Whitman

To-day a rude brief recitative,
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-
signal,
Of unnamed heroes in the ships—of waves spreading and
spreading far as the eye can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,
Fitful, like a surge.

Of sea-captains young and old, and the mates, and of all
intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never
surprise nor death dismay,
Picked sparingly without noise by thee, old ocean, chosen
by thee,
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and
unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,
Indomitable, untamed as thee. . . .

Flaunt out, O sea, your separate flags of nations !
Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-signals !
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul
of man one flag above all the rest,
A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man
elate above death,
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates
And all that went down doing their duty,
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains
young or old,
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave
sailors,
All seas, all ships.

CARGOES

John Masefield

QUINQUEREME of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

A PASSER-BY

Robert Bridges

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding—
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capp'd,
grandest
Peak that is over the feathery palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhail'd and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Past the Pyrenean pines,
Followed up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheeled on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings ;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dashed on every rocky square
Their surging charges foamed themselves away ;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice

At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

*L'ENVOI**Rudyard Kipling*

THERE's a whisper down the field where the year has shot
her yield
And the ricks stand gray to the sun,
Singing : " Over then, come over, for the bee has quit the
clover
And your English summer's done."
You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind
And the thresh of the deep-sea rain ;
You have heard the song—how long ! how long !
Pull out on the trail again !

Ha' done with the Tents of Shem, dear lass,
We've seen the seasons through,
And it's time to turn on the old trail, our own trail, the out
trail,
Pull out, pull out, on the Long Trail—the trail that is
always new.

It's North you may run to the rime-ring'd sun,
Or South to the blind Horn's hate ;
Or East all the way into Mississippi Bay,
Or West to the Golden Gate ;
Where the blindest bluffs hold good, dear lass,
And the wildest tales are true,
And the men bulk big on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
And life runs large on the Long Trail—the trail that is
always new.

The days are sick and cold, and the skies are gray and old,
And the twice-breathed airs blow damp ;
And I'd sell my tired soul for the bucking beam-sea roll
Of a black Bilbao tramp ;
With her load-line over her hatch, dear lass,
And a drunken Dago crew,
And her nose held down on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
From Cadiz Bar on the Long Trail—the trail that is always
new.

There be triple ways to take, of the eagle or the snake,
Or the way of a man with a maid ;
But the sweetest way to me is a ship's upon the sea
In the heel of the North-East Trade.
Can you hear the crash on her bows, dear lass,
And the drum of the racing screw,
As she ships it green on the old trail, our own trail, the out
trail,
As she lifts and 'scends on the Long Trail— the trail that is
always new ?

See the shaking funnels roar, with the Peter at the fore,
And the fenders grind and heave,
And the derricks clack and grate, as the tackle hooks the crate,
And the fall-rope whines through the sheave ;
It's " Gang-plank up and in," dear lass,
It's " Hawsers warp her through ! "
And it's " All clear aft " on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
We're backing down on the Long Trail—the trail that is
always new.

O the mutter overside, when the port-fog holds us tied,
And the sirens hoot their dread !
When foot by foot we creep o'er the hueless viewless deep
To the sob of the questing lead !

It's down by the Lower Hope, dear lass,
With the Gunsfleet Sands in view,
Till the Mouse swings green on the old trail, our own trail,
the out trail,
And the Gull Light lifts on the Long Trail—the trail that
is always new.

O the blazing tropic night, when the wake's a welt of
light
That holds the hot sky tame,
And the steady fore-foot snores through the planet-
powder'd floors
Where the scared whale flukes in flame !
Her plates are scarr'd by the sun, dear lass,
And her ropes are taut with the dew,
For we're booming down on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
We're sagging south on the Long Trail—the trail that is
always new.

Then home, get her home, where the drunken rollers comb,
And the shouting seas drive by,
And the engines stamp and ring, and the wet bows reel and
swing,
And the Southern Cross rides high !
Yes, the old lost stars wheel back, dear lass,
That blaze in the velvet blue.
They're all old friends on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
They're God's own guides on the Long Trail—the trail that
is always new.

Fly forward, O my heart, from the Foreland to the Start—
We're steaming all too slow,
And it's twenty thousand mile to our little lazy isle
Where the trumpet-orchids blow !

You have heard the call of the off-shore wind
And the voice of the deep-sea rain ;
You have heard the song—how long ! how long !
Pull out on the trail again !

The Lord knows what we may find, dear lass,
And the deuce knows what we may do—
But we're back once more on the old trail, our own trail, the
out trail,
We're down, hull down on the Long Trail—the trail that
is always new.

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Julia Ward Howe

MINE eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord ;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath
are stored ;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift
sword ;

His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling
camps ;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and
damps ;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring
lamps ;

His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel :
“ As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace
shall deal ;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his
heel,

Since God is marching on.”

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call
 retreat ;
 He is sifting out the hearts of men before His Judgment-
 seat ;
 Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him ! be jubilant, my
 feet !

Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
 With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me :
 As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free
 While God is marching on.

AS TOILSOME I WANDER'D VIRGINIA'S WOODS

Walt Whitman

As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods,
 To the music of rustling leaves kick'd by my feet
 (for 'twas Autumn),
 I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier :
 Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat
 (easily all could I understand !)
 The halt of a midday hour, when up ! no time to lose—
 yet this sign left,
 On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave—
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,
 Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of life,
 Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt,
 alone, or in the crowded street,
 Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the
 inscription rude in Virginia's woods,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

INTO BATTLE

Julian Grenfell

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight ;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend ;
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The black bird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy of Battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings ;
But they shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

“ MEN WHO MARCH AWAY ”

(SONG OF THE SOLDIERS)

Thomas Hardy

WHAT of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
Leaving all that here can win us ;
What of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away ?

Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye,
Who watch us stepping by
With doubt and dolorous sigh ?
Can much pondering so hoodwink you !
Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye ?

Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
Dalliers as they be—
England's need are we ;
Her distress would leave us rueing :
Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see !

In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
Press we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
Leaving all that here can win us ;
Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away.

THE DEAD

Rupert Brooke

BLOW out, you bugles, over the rich dead !
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away ; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth ; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhopèd serene,
That men call age ; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow ! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage ;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again,
And we have come into our heritage.

EVERY ONE SANG

Siegfried Sassoon

EVERY one suddenly burst out singing ;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields ; on ; on ; and out of sight.

Every one's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O but every one
Was a bird ; and the song was wordless, the singing will
never be done.

FOR THE FALLEN

Laurence Binyon

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill : Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old :
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again ;
They sit no more at familiar tables at home ;
They have no lot in our labour of the daytime :
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night.

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

MILTON

Blake

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountain green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear : O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,
 Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
 Till we have built Jerusalem
 In England's green and pleasant land.

SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Clough

SAY not, the struggle nought availeth,
 The labour and the wounds are vain,
 The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
 And as things have been, they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;
 It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
 Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
 And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
 Seem here no painful inch to gain,
 Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
 Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
 When daylight comes, comes in the light,
 In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
 But westward, look, the land is bright.

THE WORLD'S GREAT AGE BEGINS ANEW

Shelley

THE world's great age begins anew,
 The golden years return,
 The earth doth like a snake renew
 Her winter weeds outworn :
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far ;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning-star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize ;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

O, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be !
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free :
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime ;
And leave, if naught so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued :
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

O cease ! must hate and death return ?
Cease ! must men kill and die ?
Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
O might it die or rest at last !

THE UPRIGHT MAN

Campion

THE man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
Or thoughts of vanity :

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude,
Nor sorrow discontent—

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence.

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things ;

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age ;
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

SWEET CONTENT

Dekker

ART thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers ?

O sweet content !

Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed ?

O punishment !

Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed

To add to golden numbers, golden numbers ?

O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny !

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring ?

O sweet content !

Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears ?

O punishment !

Then he that patiently want's burden bears

No burden bears, but is a king, a king !

O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny !

ON EASTNOR KNOLL

John Masefield

SILENT are the woods, and the dim green boughs are
Hushed in the twilight · yonder, in the path through
The apple orchard, is a tired ploughboy
Calling the cows home.

A bright white star blinks, the pale moon rounds, but
Still the red, lurid wreckage of the sunset
Smoulders in smoky fire, and burns on
The misty hilltop.

Ghostly it grows, and darker, the burning
Fades into smoke, and now the gusty oaks are
A silent army of phantoms thronging
A land of shadows.

O DREAMY, GLOOMY, FRIENDLY TREES

Herbert Trench

O DREAMY, gloomy, friendly Trees,
I came along your narrow track
To bring my gifts unto your knees
And gifts did you give back ;
For when I brought this heart that burns—
These thoughts that bitterly repine—
And laid them here among the ferns
And the hum of boughs divine,
Ye, vastest breathers of the air,
Shook down with slow and mighty poise
Your coolness on the human care,
Your wonder on its toys,
Your greenness on the heart's despair,
Your darkness on its noise.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Wordsworth

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass !
Reaping and singing by herself ;
Stop here, or gently pass !
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
O listen ! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty :
And, if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unprovoked pleasures free ;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise ;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine ;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin ;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before :
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerily rouse the slumb'ring morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill :
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight ;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures :

Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray ;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest ;
Meadows trim with daisies pied ;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide ;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses ;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequer'd shade,
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail :
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinch'd and pull'd, she said ;
And he by Friars' lantern led
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands :
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago :
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again !

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;—
I listen'd, motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

MAESIA'S SONG

Greene

SWEET are the thoughts that savour of content ;
The quiet mind is richer than a crown ;
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent ;
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown :
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

The homely house that harbours quiet rest ;
 The cottage that affords no pride nor care ;
 The mean that 'grees with country music best ;
 The sweet consort of mirth and modest fare ;
 Obscurèd life sets down a type of bliss :
 A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

THE LITTLE DANCERS

Laurence Binyon

LONELY, save for a few faint stars, the sky
 Dreams ; and lonely, below, the little street
 Into its gloom retires, secluded and shy.
 Scarcely the dumb roar enters this soft retreat ;
 And all is dark, save where come flooding rays
 From a tavern window : there, to the brisk measure
 Of an organ that down in an alley merrily plays,
 Two children, all alone and no one by,
 Holding their tattered frocks, through an airy maze
 Of motion, lightly threaded with nimble feet,
 Dance sedately : face to face they gaze,
 Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure.

THE CHEERFUL HEART (from *l'Allegro*)*Milton*

HASTE thee, Nymph,¹ and bring with thee
 Jest, and youthful Jollity,
 Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
 Nods and Becks and wreathèd Smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek ;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it, as you go,
 On the light fantastic toe ;

¹ The Goddess of Mirth.

When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn
 That ten day-labourers could not end;
 Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
 And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.

THE PLEASURES OF MELANCHOLY

(from *Il Penseroso*)

Milton

COME, pensive Nun,¹ devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of cypress lawn
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
 There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
 And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Ay round about Jove's altar sing;
 And add to these retirèd Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;

¹ Pensive Nun—"divinest Melancholy."

But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplation ;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy !
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song ;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry, smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide, pathless way ;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar ;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,

Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;
 And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or underground,
 Whose power hath a true consent
 With planet or with element.
 Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine,
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

.

But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high embowèd roof,
 With antique pillars massy-proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voiced quire below,
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell
 Of every star that heaven doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew ;

Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.
 These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
 And I with thee will choose to live.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

Milton

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent, which is death to hide,
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest He, returning, chide ;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ?"
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies : "God doth not need
 Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
 Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
 Is kingly. Thousands, at His bidding, speed
 And post o'er land and ocean, without rest ;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

ORPHEUS WITH HIS LUTE

Shakespear

ORPHEUS with his lute made trees,
 And the mountain tops that freeze,
 Bow themselves when he did sing :
 To his music, plants and flowers
 Ever sprung ; as sun and showers
 There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
 Even the billows of the sea,
 Hung their heads and then lay by.
 In sweet music is such art,
 Killing care and grief of heart
 Fall asleep or, hearing, die.

SERVICE OF ALL THE DEAD

D. H. Lawrence

BETWEEN the avenues of cypresses,
All in their scarlet cloaks, and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery
The round, dark heads of men crowd silently,
And black-scarved faces of women-folk, wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head, and forgotten, folded hands ;
And at the foot of a grave a woman kneels
With pale shut face, and neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenues of cypresses,
The silence of so many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

THE SCHOLAR GIPSY

Arnold

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill ;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes !
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd grasses shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green,
Come, Shepherd, and again begin the quest !

Here, where the reaper was at work of late—
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruse,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use—
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-reap'd field,
And here till sun-down, Shepherd, will I be !
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep ;
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade ;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again !
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the Gipsy lore,
And roam'd the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deem'd, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
Two scholars whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquir'd ;
Whereat he answer'd, that the Gipsy crew,

His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains ;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will.
" And I," he said, " the secret of their art,
When fully learn'd, will to the world impart ;
But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this skill ! "

This said, he left them, and return'd no more.—
But rumours hung about the countryside
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the Gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring ;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frock'd boors
Had found him seated at their entering.

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly ;
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer ! on thy trace ;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet place ;
Or in my boat I lie
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumner hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground !
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the punt's rope chops round ;

And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more !
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anemony,
Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of summer eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,
Have often pass'd thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown ;
Mark'd thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air—
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert gone !

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee eying, all an April day,
The spring pastures and the feeding kine ;
And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds of grey,
Above the forest-ground call'd Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all ;
So often has he known thee past him stray,
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers go,
Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its wintry ridge ?
And thou hast climb'd the hill
And gain'd the white brow of the Cumner range ;
Turn'd once to watch, while thick the snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequester'd grange.

But what—I dream ! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wander'd from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a Gipsy tribe.
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid !
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade. . . .

THE LAIRD O' COCKPEN

Lady Nairne

THE LAIRD o' Cockpen he's proud an' he's great,
His mind is ta'en up wi' the things o' the State ;
He wanted a wife his braw house to keep,
But favour wi' wooin' was fashious¹ to seek.

Doon by the dyle-side a lady did dwell,
At his table-head he thocht she'd look well ;
M'Cleish's ae dochter, o' Clavers-ha' Lee,
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was weel pouther'd, as gude as when new ;
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue ;
He put on a ring, a sword, an' cocked hat,
An' wha could refuse the Laird wi' a' that ?

He took the grey mare, he rade cannilie,
An' rapped at the yett² o' Clavers-ha' Lee ;
"Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben,—
She's wanted to speak wi' the Laird o' Cockpen."

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elder-flow'r wine ;
"An' what brings the Laird at sic a like time ?"
She put aff her apron, an' on her silk goon,
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, an' gae'd awa doon.

An' when she cam' ben he bowèd fu' low,
An' what was his errand he soon let her know ;
Amazed was the Laird when the lady said "Na !"
An' wi' a laigh curtsie she turnèd awa' !

Dumfounder'd was he, but nae sigh did he gi'e,
He mounted his mare an' he rade cannilie ;
An' often he thocht, as he gae'd through the glen,
"She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen !"

¹ Fashious—fastidious.² Yett—gate.

THE VICAR

Wintbrop M. Praed

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
Had turn'd our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way, between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath ;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle ;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seem'd to say—
“Our master knows you—you're expected.”

Uprose the Reverend Dr. Brown,
Uprose the Doctor's winsome marrow ;
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasp'd his ponderous Barrow ;
Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or Papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reach'd his journey's end,
And warm'd himself in Court or College,
He had not gain'd an honest friend
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge,—

If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage, or the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream, which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses :
It slipt from politics to puns,
It pass'd from Mahomet to Moses ;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels, or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror ;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablish'd Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep ;
The Deist sigh'd with saving sorrow ;
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
And dream'd of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or show'd
That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome, or from Athanasius :
And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penn'd and plann'd them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble Lords—and nurses ;

True histories of last year's ghost,
 Lines to a ringlet or a turban,
 And trifles for the *Morning Post*,
 And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
 Although he had a knack of joking :
 He did not make himself a bear,
 Although he had a taste for smoking ;
 And when religious sects ran mad,
 He held, in spite of all his learning,
 That if a man's belief is bad,
 It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
 In the low hut or garnish'd cottage,
 And praise the farmer's homely wit,
 And share the widow's homelier pottage :
 At his approach complaint grew mild ;
 And when his hand unbarr'd the shutter,
 The clammy lips of fever smiled
 The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
 Of Julius Cæsar, or of Venus ;
 From him I learnt the rule of three,
 Cat's cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus*.
 I used to singe his powder'd wig,
 To steal the staff he put such trust in,
 And make the puppy dance a jig,
 When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change ! in vain I look
 For haunts in which my boyhood trifled,
 The level lawn, the trickling brook,
 The trees I climb'd, the beds I rifled :

The church is larger than before ;
 You reach it by a carriage entry ;
 It holds three hundred people more,
 And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat : you'll hear
 The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
 Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
 Whose praise is very Ciceronian.
 Where is the old man laid ?—look down,
 And construe on the slab before you,
 “ *Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,*
Vir nullâ non donandus lauru.”

THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD WITH HIS SON

Calverley

Oh, what harper could worthily harp it,
 Mine Edward ! this wide-stretching wold
 (Look out *wold*) with its wonderful carpet
 Of emerald, purple, and gold ?
 Look well at it—also look sharp, it
 Is getting so cold.

The purple is heather (*erica*) ;
 The yellow, gorse—call'd sometimes “ whin.”
 Cruel boys on its prickles might spike a
 Queen beetle as if on a pin.
 You may ride in it, if you would like a
 Few holes in your skin.

You wouldn't ? Then think of how kind you
 Should be to the insects who crave
 Your compassion—and then look behind you
 At yon barley-ears ! Don't they look brave
 As they undulate (*undulate*, mind you,
 From *unda*, a wave).

The noise of those sheep-bells, how faint it
Sounds here (on account of our height) !
And this hillock itself, who could paint it,
With its changes of shadow and light ?
Is it not—(never, Eddie, say “ ain’t it ”)—
A marvellous sight ?

Then yon desolate eerie morasses,
The haunt of the snipe and the hern—
(I shall question the two upper classes
On *aquatiles* when we return)—
Why, I see on them absolute masses
Of *felix*, or fern.

How it interests e’en a beginner
(Or *tiro*) like dear little Ned !
Is he listening ? As I am a sinner,
He’s asleep—he is wagging his head.
Wake up ! I’ll go home to my dinner,
And you to your bed.

The boundless, ineffable prairie ;
The splendour of mountain and lake,
With their hues that seem ever to vary ;
The mighty pine-forests which shake
In the wind, and in which the unwary
May tread on a snake ;

And this wold, with its heathery garment,
Are themes undeniably great.
But—although there is not any harm in’t—
It’s perhaps little good to dilate
On their charms to a dull little varmint
Of seven or eight.

A CRICKET BOWLER

E. C. Lefroy

Two minutes' rest till the next man goes in !
The tired arms lie, with every sinew slack,
On the mown grass. Unbent the supple back,
And elbows apt to make the leather spin
Up the slow bat and round the unwary shin—
In knavish hands a most unkindly knock ;
But no guile shelters under this boy's black
Crisp hair, frank eyes, and honest English skin.

Two minutes only ! Conscious of a name,
The new man plants his weapon with profound
Long-practised skill that no mere trick can scare.
Not loth, the rested lad resumes the game ;
The flung ball takes one madding tortuous bound,
And the mid-stump turns somersaults in air.

THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS SHAY"

Oliver Wendell Holmes

HAVE you heard of the wonderful One-Hoss Shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day ?
And then of a sudden it—ah ! but stay,
I'll tell you what happened, without delay—
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits—
Have you ever heard of that, I say ?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five ;
Georgius Secundus was then alive—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive !—
That was the year when Lisbon town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down ;

And Braddock's army was done so brown,
 Left without a scalp to its crown.
 It was on that terrible Earthquake day
 That the Deacon finished the One-Hoss Shay.

Now, in building of chaises, I tell you what,
 There is always, *somewhere*, a weakest spot—
 In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
 In panel or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
 In screw, bolt, thorough-brace—lurking still.
 Find it somewhere, you must and will—
 Above or below, or within or without ;
 And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
 A chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.
 But the Deacon swore (as deacons do,
 With an "I dew vum" or an "I tell yeou,")
 He would build one shay to beat the taown
 'N' the keounty 'n' the kentry raoun' ;
 It should be built so that it couldn' break daown :
 "Fur," said the Deacon, "'tis mighty plain
 Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain ;
 'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
 Is only jest
 To make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
 Where he could find the strongest oak,
 That couldn't be split, nor bent, nor broke—
 That was for spokes and floor and sills ;
 He sent for lancewood to make the thills ;
 The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees ;
 'The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
 But lasts like iron for things like these ;
 The hubs from logs from the "Settler's Ellum,"
 Last of its timber—they couldn't sell 'em—

Never an axe had seen their chips,
 And the wedges flew from between their lips,
 Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips ;
 Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
 Spring, tire, axle, and linch-pin too,
 Steel of the finest, bright and blue ;
 Thorough-brace bison-skin, thick and wide ;
 Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide,
 Found in the pit where the tanner died.
 That was the way he " put her through."
 " There," said the Deacon, " naow she'll dew ! "

Do ! I tell you, I rather guess
 She was a wonder, and nothing less !
 Colts grew horses, beards turned grey,
 Deacon and deaconess dropped away ;
 Children and grandchildren—where were they ?
 But there stood the stout old One-Hoss Shay,
 As fresh as on Lisbon Earthquake day !

Eighteen hundred—it came, and found
 The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred, increased by ten—
 " Hahnsum Kerridge " they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came—
 Running as usual—much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive ;
 And then came *fifty*—and *fifty-five*.

Little of all we value here
 Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
 Without both feeling and looking queer.
 In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
 So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
 (This is a moral that runs at large ;
 Take it—you're welcome—no extra charge.)

First of November—the Earthquake day—
 There are traces of age in the One-Hoss Shay—
 A general flavour of mild decay—
 But nothing local, as one may say.
 There couldn't be, for the Deacon's art
 Had made it so like in every part
 That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
 For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
 And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
 And the panels just as strong as the floor,
 And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
 And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
 And the spring and axle and hub *encore* ;
 And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt,
 In another hour it will be worn out.

First of November, 'Fifty-five !

This morning the parson takes a drive.
 Now, small boys, get out of the way !
 Here comes the wonderful One-Hoss Shay,
 Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
 "Huddup !" said the parson—off went they !

The parson was working his Sunday text ;
 Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped, perplexed
 At what the—Moses—was coming next.
 All at once the horse stood still,
 Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill :
 First a shiver, and then a thrill,
 And something decidedly like a spill ;
 And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
 At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock—
 Just the hour of the Earthquake shock !
 What do you think the parson found
 When he got up and stared around ?

The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
 As if it had been to the mill and ground !
 You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
 How it went to pieces all at once—
 All at once, and nothing first—
 Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful One-Hoss Shay !
Logic is Logic. That's all I say.

WORDS

Edward Thomas

Our of us all
 That makes rhymes,
 Will you choose
 Sometimes—
 As the winds use
 A crack in the wall
 Or a drain,
 Their joy or their pain
 To whistle through—
 Choose me,
 You English words ?

I know you :
 You are light as dreams,
 Tough as oak,
 Precious as gold,
 As poppies and corn,
 Or an old cloak ;
 Sweet as our birds
 To the ear,
 As the burnet rose

In the heat
 Of Midsummer :
 Strange as the races
 Of dead and unborn :

Strange and sweet
Equally,
And familiar,
To the eye,
As the dearest faces
That a man knows,
And as lost homes are :
But though older far
Than oldest yew,—
As our hills are, old,—
Worn new
Again and again :
Young as our streams
After rain :
And as dear
As the earth which you prove
That we love.

Make me content
With some sweetness
From Wales,
Whose nightingales
Have no wings,—
From Wiltshire and Kent
And Herefordshire,
And the villages there,—
From the names, and the things
No less.
Let me sometimes dance
With you,
Or climb,
Or stand perchance
In ecstasy,
Fixed and free
In a rhyme,
As poets do.

MARTHA

Walter de la Mare

"ONCE . . . once upon a time . . ."
Over and over again,
Martha would tell us her stories,
In the hazel glen.

Hers were those clear grey eyes
You watch, and the story seems
Told by their beautifulness
Tranquil as dreams.

She would sit with her two slim hands
Clasped round her bended knees ;
While we on our elbows lolled,
And stared at ease.

Her voice, her narrow chin,
Her grave small lovely head,
Seemed half the meaning
Of the words she said.

"Once . . . once upon a time . . ."
Like a dream you dream in the night,
Fairies and gnomes stole out
In the leaf-green light.

And her beauty far away
Would fade, as her voice ran on,
Till hazel and summer sun
And all were gone :

All fordone and forgot ;
And like clouds in the height of the sky,
Our hearts stood still in the hush
Of an age gone by.

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